MAY 16, 1975/75 CENTS

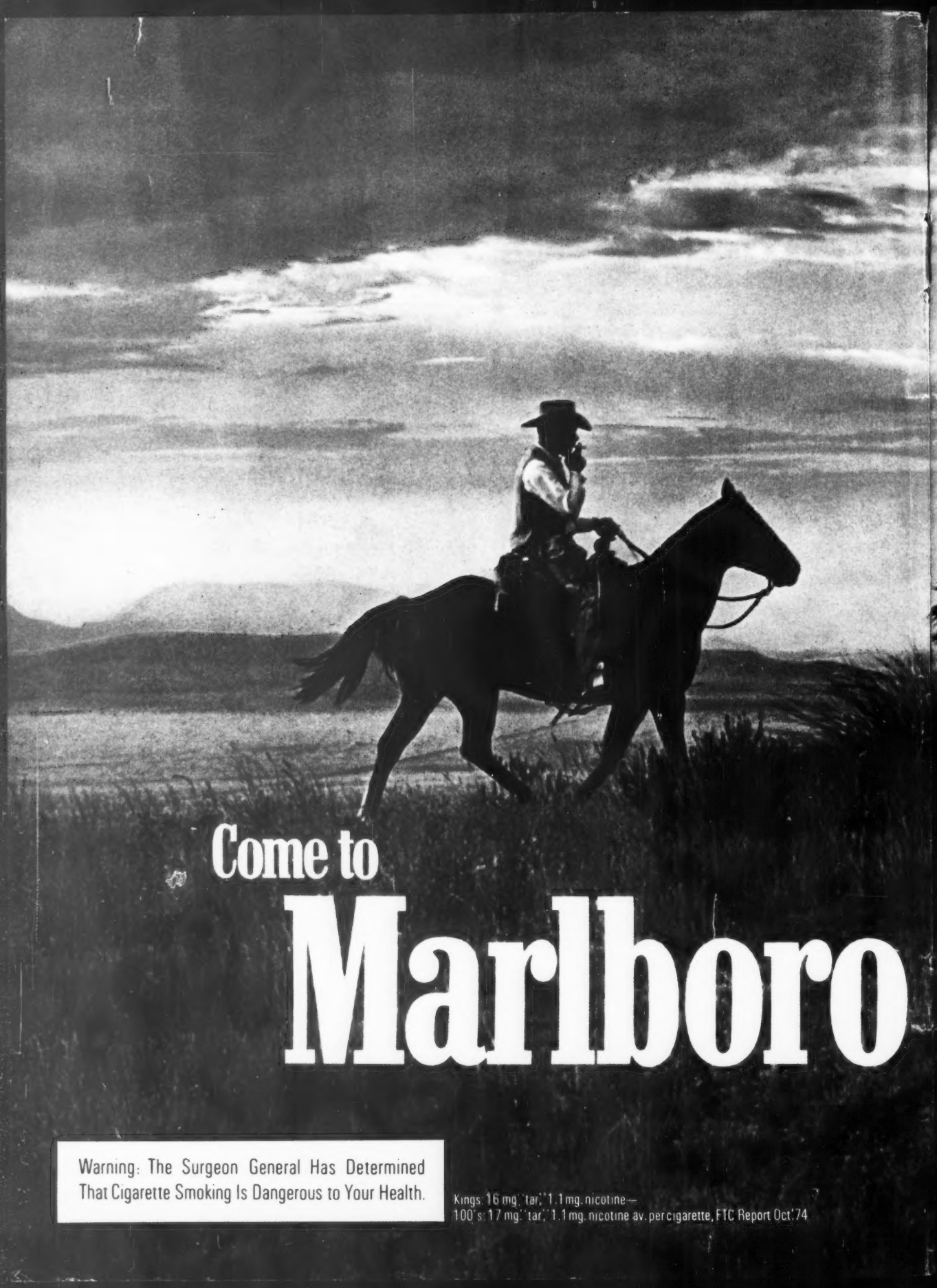
THE FEATURE NEWS MAGAZINE

NEW TIMES

Were the Rosenbergs framed?

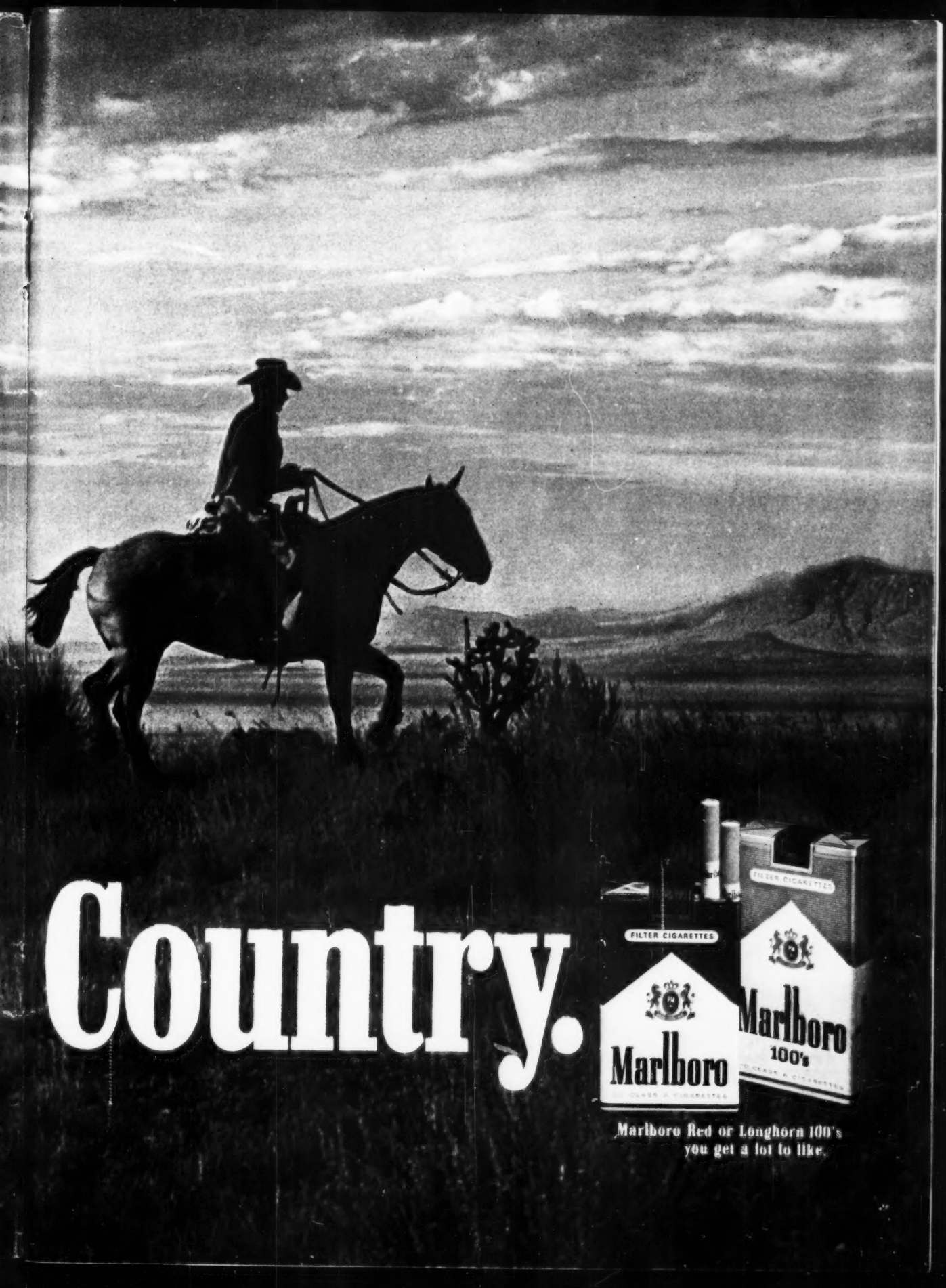
Halberstam: Last reflections on Vietnam

Alaska pipe dreams



Warning: The Surgeon General Has Determined That Cigarette Smoking Is Dangerous to Your Health.

Kings: 16 mg. "tar," 1.1 mg. nicotine—
100's: 17 mg. "tar," 1.1 mg. nicotine av. per cigarette, FTC Report Oct.'74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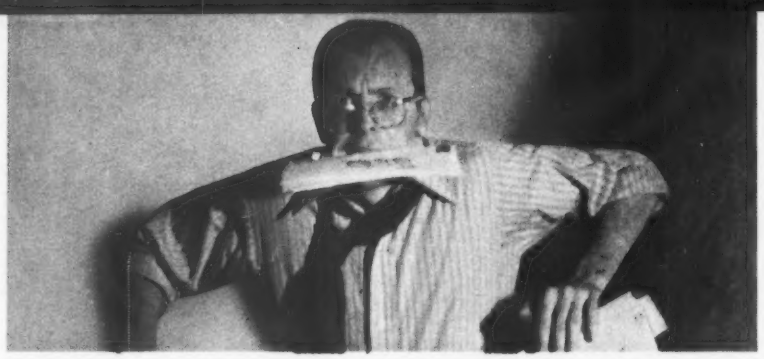

NEW TIMES, May 16, 1975, Volume 4, Number 10

TOP OF THE NEWS

Victims of a desperate age *It's been 22 years since Ethel and Julius Rosenberg died in the electric chair, but their memory still inspires fierce passions. Now—with their sons about to publish a book in their defense—questions about "The Spy Story of the Century" are more insistent than ever* **By Daniel Yergin** 20

An epitaph drear *Nothing in our recent history so reflected the difference between what we were and what we wanted to be as the war in Vietnam* **By David Halberstam** 30

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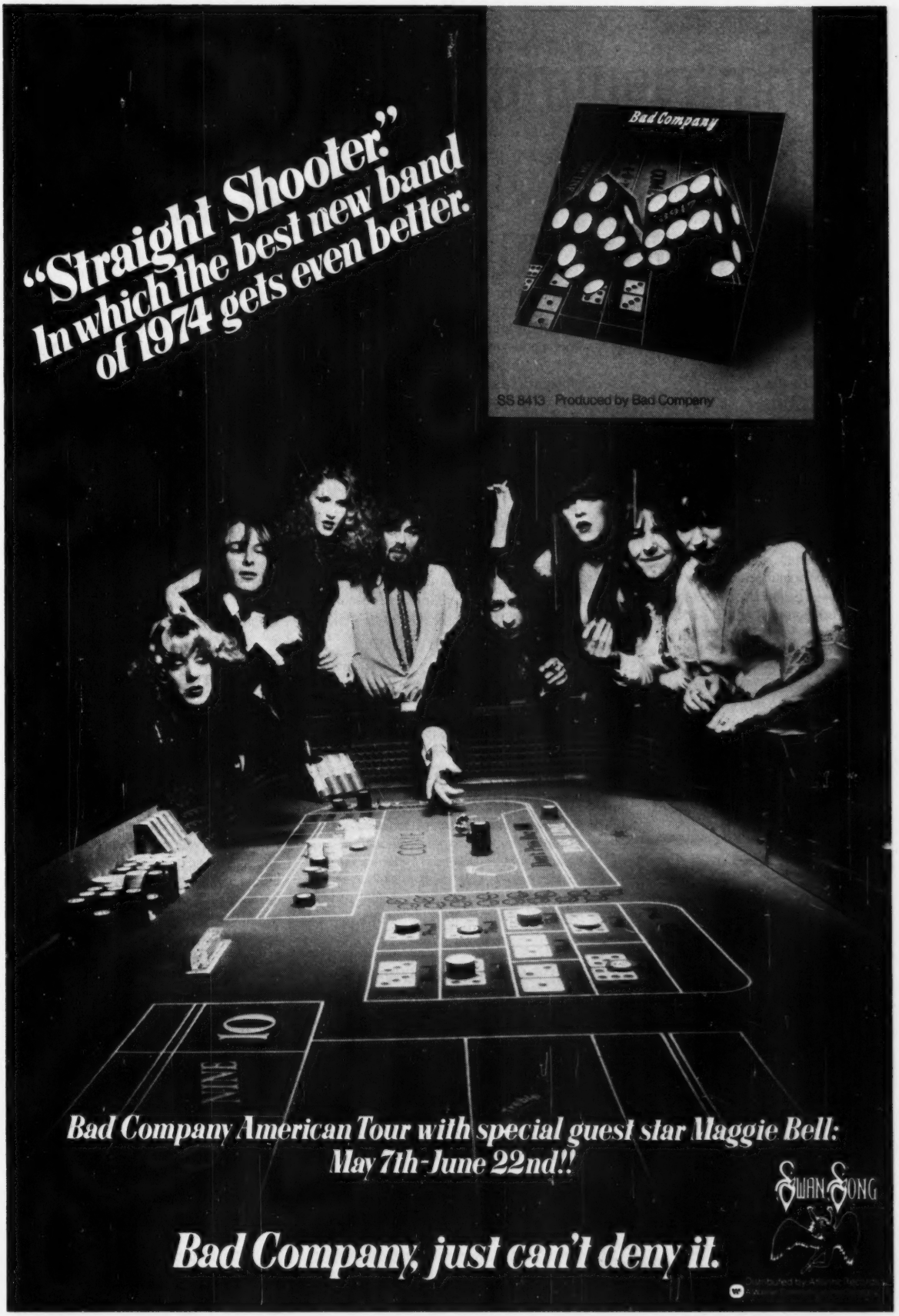
"Straight Shooter."
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of 1974 gets even better.
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Bad Company American Tour with special guest star Maggie Bell:
May 7th-June 22nd!!
SWAN SONG
Bad Company, just can't deny it.

LETTERS

The assassination of President Kennedy

Kudos to R.S. Anson for his article on the Kennedy assassination. Thumbs down on the morbid cover picture ("The greatest cover-up of all," April 18).
George K. Kmetz
Cleveland, Ohio

My most appreciative thanks for your outstanding, astounding and concise article by Robert Sam Anson. This brilliant, informative piece, along with the unaltered films, shot that day by Abraham Zapruder and Orville Nix, that *clearly* show (when frozen at certain stages and then blown up) *assassins* pointing rifles at the President's car, proves beyond a doubt that the unsolved murder of John F. Kennedy demands an immediate investigation by a task force that has no ties or links to any of our intelligence communities.

Thank you again for raising the questions that *Time, Newsweek, Life, Look* and our national media have *refused* to do in the 11 years since the murder.
Brian Winters
Sherman Oaks, California

I sometimes like to be shocked. I don't mind being offended. Your magazine cover of April 18 both shocked and offended me—beyond my tolerances. It's your right. But I had to tell you.
Robert Keldsen
Oak Park, Illinois

The Warren Commission's report is more nauseating than any commercial ever produced. Yet people continue to buy the notion that the power to vote really means something in a country run by a cabal bigger than the Kennedys, bigger than the Supreme Court, bigger than Congress itself. The polling booth, like religion, is a place for the very old or the very dumb.
Richard Rynen
Middleton, Wisconsin

Congratulations on Robert Sam Anson's article about the Kennedy assassination. It was lucid, reasonable and very disturbing.
James Fallows
Austin, Texas

I have just finished the Robert Sam Anson article on the Kennedy assassination. I have long been a "student" of the assassination and have read works by various critics such as Lane, Weisberg, Penn Jones, et al.

I am greatly encouraged by the amount of "play" recently given to the call for a congressional reinvestigation, both by magazines such as your own and by television, such as ABC's *Wide World of Entertainment*. It appears that enough interest and pressure is being brought to bear that we may actually be able to get a reinvestigation under way.

In that regard, I would gladly undertake to get a petition to congressional representatives from my area, urging that they consider an inquiry and that they support Congressman Gonzalez' resolution before the House.
Kenneth A. Cristofani
Columbus, Ohio

Editor's Note: Congressman Gonzalez' resolution, which would open congressional investigations into the assassinations of John Kennedy, Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy, has been referred to the House Rules Committee. To express an opinion on the resolution, write your own congressperson. Gonzalez is especially anxious to get additional co-sponsors. Residents of Indiana's 1st District have special clout; their representative, Ray Madden, is the powerful chairman of the committee.

The cover of the April 18th issue—showing JFK in the process of having his head blown off—was in very poor taste. We are already aware of what happened in Dallas and we realize our loss; it need not be so graphically presented to us again. I doubt a member of his family or a friend would appreciate seeing it as they pass the newsstand.
Marianne Billman
Hollywood, Florida

Upon gazing through some magazines at my brother's home, I came upon your April 18, 1975, issue of *New Times*. I felt nauseated. Do you realize the impact this had on me and could have on the public? I know perfectly well how President Kennedy was shot and that it was a very sickening event, but I also remember my feelings on that day, which your cover so clearly reminded me of.

There is enough violence in the media without seeing President Kennedy being brutally murdered right on the front cover of your magazine. It is most sadistic and it hurts me deeply to think that you would really print something like this, and on the front cover.
Roseann M. Vona
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Why must your magazine join the ranks of those who are known for their sensational and shoddy journalism? Your April 18 cover stinks more than the fish I wrapped with it.
Mary J. Doherty
Brighton, Massachusetts

The aerosol threat

If Easy-Off Oven Cleaner manages to function without fluorocarbons, why is it necessary for countless other products to employ them? ("Not with a bang, but with a psssst!" March 7) When I read your article about this, it didn't come as a total surprise. I had heard some vague mention of it before. But I was certainly not aware that the danger was so great. Since I've read the article, I've heard absolutely nothing else in the media about any of this. Obviously, the rest of the media considers aerosol cans a subject with a short fuse and is staying out of it. Therefore, I believe it your duty to print a follow-up on the subject. If it's really as heavy as you say, people should know everything about it. Let's have a follow-up.
E.E. Willard
San Francisco, California

Editor's Note: Fortunately, in the last month there has been a fair amount of coverage on the aerosol threat. The New Yorker *ran a long piece in their April 7 issue, and the New York* Times *has printed several stories. For our own follow-up, please see The Insider.*

Just friends

Last month *New Times* printed an untrue and snide article about me (Insider, April 18). I did not have dinner with my

friend Warren Beatty last month, nor was I "elected to statewide office" but rather represent a district within the city of Boston. I am more concerned, however, about why *New Times* thought such a story worth printing. Is it newsworthy that he—or I—enjoy seeing and talking to our friends? Or do you find it so "unlikely" that a man and woman can truly be friends without the possibility of a sexual relationship?

At a time when most current publications have learned to accept the fact that women are people—entitled to respect and to be taken seriously—it is sad that *New Times* is so badly out of date. Perhaps you could consider adding a feminist to your decision-making process. Or if you already have one—start listening to her.

Elaine Noble
House of Representatives
Boston, Massachusetts

Editor's Note: "Statewide office" should have read "state office." We apologize. We reported that Beatty and Noble had dinner together; in fact, they met, with a couple of friends, in Beatty's hotel suite.

It isn't newsworthy that a man and a woman can be friends without a sexual relationship. It is newsworthy when the woman is Elaine Noble, a prominent lesbian-feminist, and the man is Warren Beatty, widely thought of as a Shampoo*-style sexual superman.*

Stirring emotions

While I am not usually prone to writing fan mail, I feel that you all deserve compliments. I have been, and still am, impressed by the variety of coverage, the analysis and the style of *New Times*. The April 4 issue, which I have just finished reading, prompted me to send this letter. The article on Selma, Alabama, stirred emotions which I only fleetingly have experienced in the last few years. The article "Bloodbaths in perspective" was also excellent and also reawakened some dormant feelings. It is encouraging to see concern of this type and it has re-energized me in some ways. Continue with your efforts.

Marian Kowacki
Amherst, Massachusetts

Silva Mind Control

New Times has received a number of letters and phone calls requesting information on Silva Mind Control ("Under Control," May 2). As our article stated, centers are located in every state. Please address requests for information to The Mind Control and Growth Centers of New York, Inc., 6 East 39th Street, New York, NY 10016, telephone 212-Mu4-6477.

Our Traminer grapes are good enough to be called Gewürz.

There is a story behind Almadén Gewürztraminer.

Long ago on a stony hillside of the Austrian Tyrol the subtly aromatic Traminer white wine grape came into being. From there it spread to the greatest vineyards of all Europe.

Soon wine makers discovered that under ideal conditions of soil and climate a rare strain of Traminer would be produced—one that surpassed the Traminer with a pronounced spicy flavor and a full, flowery aroma. The Germans quickly christened it "Gewürz," or spicy, Traminer.

Years later, we found the elusive growing conditions for this special breed in a tiny corner of the Almadén region of Northern California. In fact, our shy-bearing, pinkish-grey champion is one of the few grapes worthy of the name Gewürztraminer.

See for yourself. Only a fine grape can produce a fine wine.

Almadén

Almadén Vineyards, Los Gatos and Paicines, California

Why was May 1 "Law Day, U.S.A."?

SLOW DOWN

By James S. Kunen

Take my word for it. May 1 was "Law Day, U.S.A."

Now: Why?

To come to grips with this question, which is not without its implications, we should dismiss irrelevant information and begin at the beginning.

That "May Day" is the international telephonic distress signal has nothing to do with anything except the fact that *m'aidez* means "help me" in French; so dismiss that.

To begin at the beginning, we must go back to the primeval myth and ritual of the spring festival, upon which was believed to depend the rebirth of nature. From ancient customs devolved the European folk tradition of a May Day celebration comprising unrestrained revelry and love-making. As can be imagined, the popular May Day festivities, marked as they were by the violation of normal restraints on behavior, did not enjoy the approval of the Authorities. Associated with dissenters and heretics, May Day was imbued with a certain anti-establishment flavor.

So, when, in 1884, the Federation of Organized Trade and Labor Unions (soon renamed the American Federation of Labor) passed a resolution in effect calling for a general strike in 1886 to demand an eight-hour work day, it was logical for them to pick May 1 for that action.

May Day, 1886, found widespread walkouts throughout the United States. On May 3 in Chicago, police attacked a meeting of strikers at the McCormack Reaper Works, and six workers were killed.

A demonstration was held to protest that, on May 4, in Haymarket Square. A bomb exploded in the front ranks of the police, killing a sergeant. The police opened fire on the crowd, and when the ensuing battle ended, seven police and four workers lay dead. Though no evidence was produced linking them to the bombing, four labor leaders were hanged for incitement to violence. There stands in Chicago today a monument to the seven police.

One year after the hanging of the labor leaders, the American Federation of Labor, at their 1888 St. Louis convention, voted for another nationwide strike for the eight-hour day on May 1, 1890.

The Second International Socialist Congress convened in Paris in 1889, and A.F. of L. President Samuel Gompers asked them to support the eight-hour movement. The Second International voted to organize a great international demonstration for the eight-hour day, and "since a similar demonstration has already been decided upon for May 1, 1890, by the American Federation of Labor, the day is accepted."

That is how the American Federation of Labor made May Day an international workers' day, which is now celebrated everywhere except in the United States and Canada.

ILLUSTRATION BY JOSEPH SMITH

Here, the A.F. of L., which had rapidly grown conservative and antagonistic to cheap foreign labor, supported the passage of a law by Congress in 1894 designating the first Monday in September as "Labor Day." Legal status as a holiday ensured that there would be no strikes, since no one would be working anyway. Our labor holiday differs from the rest of the world's in that all classes celebrate it.

Despite the institution of a September "Labor Day," May 1 remained on the calendar, with all its potentially troublesome associations. So, in 1928, the A.F. of L. backed the adoption of that day as "National Child Health Day," noting that "May 1 will no longer be known as either strike day or Communist Labor Day."

May Day's militant memories outlasted Child Health Day. But in 1958, at the urging of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, a joint resolution of Congress designated May 1 "Loyalty Day." It would be "an excellent means of countering Communist May Day," its House sponsor noted, as "attention should be focused on loyal Americans rather than subversive elements."

Despite the efforts of the VFW, people have not taken to dancing around Loyalty poles or exchanging Loyalty baskets—yet. And May 1 is still on the calendar.

Resolute, Congress passed a joint resolution in 1961 permanently designating May 1 as "Law Day, U.S.A.," *in addition to* "Loyalty Day." Remarks made on that occasion show how far down the Memory Hole the real origin and meaning of May Day have been dropped.

"It is significant that we should set aside as Law Day the very day used by troublemakers throughout the Western World for disorder and riots," Senator Beall said on the first "Law Day, U.S.A.," perhaps thinking of those working people who fought to establish America's unions. "To me, this observance seems typically American."

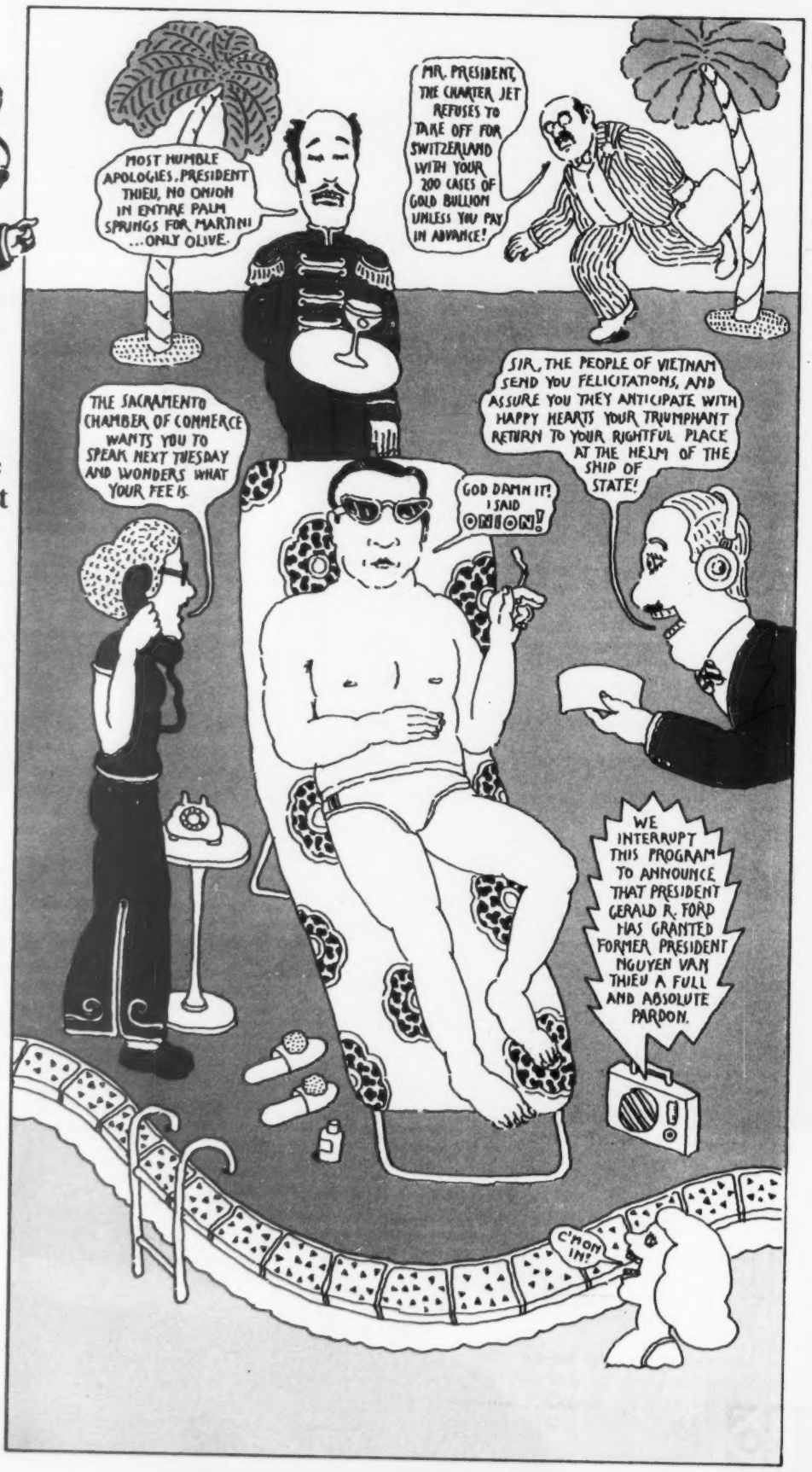
Senator Sam Ervin, after noting that the Russians were at that moment having a parade, warned that "an insidious international communist conspiracy is storming the world . . . we must remain ever alert that the siren songs of foreign ideologies do not charm us. . . . "

"Law Day is not merely a reaction to the high festival of a rival culture . . . " but a day for dedication to the rule of law, Representative Charles Mathias protested, too much.

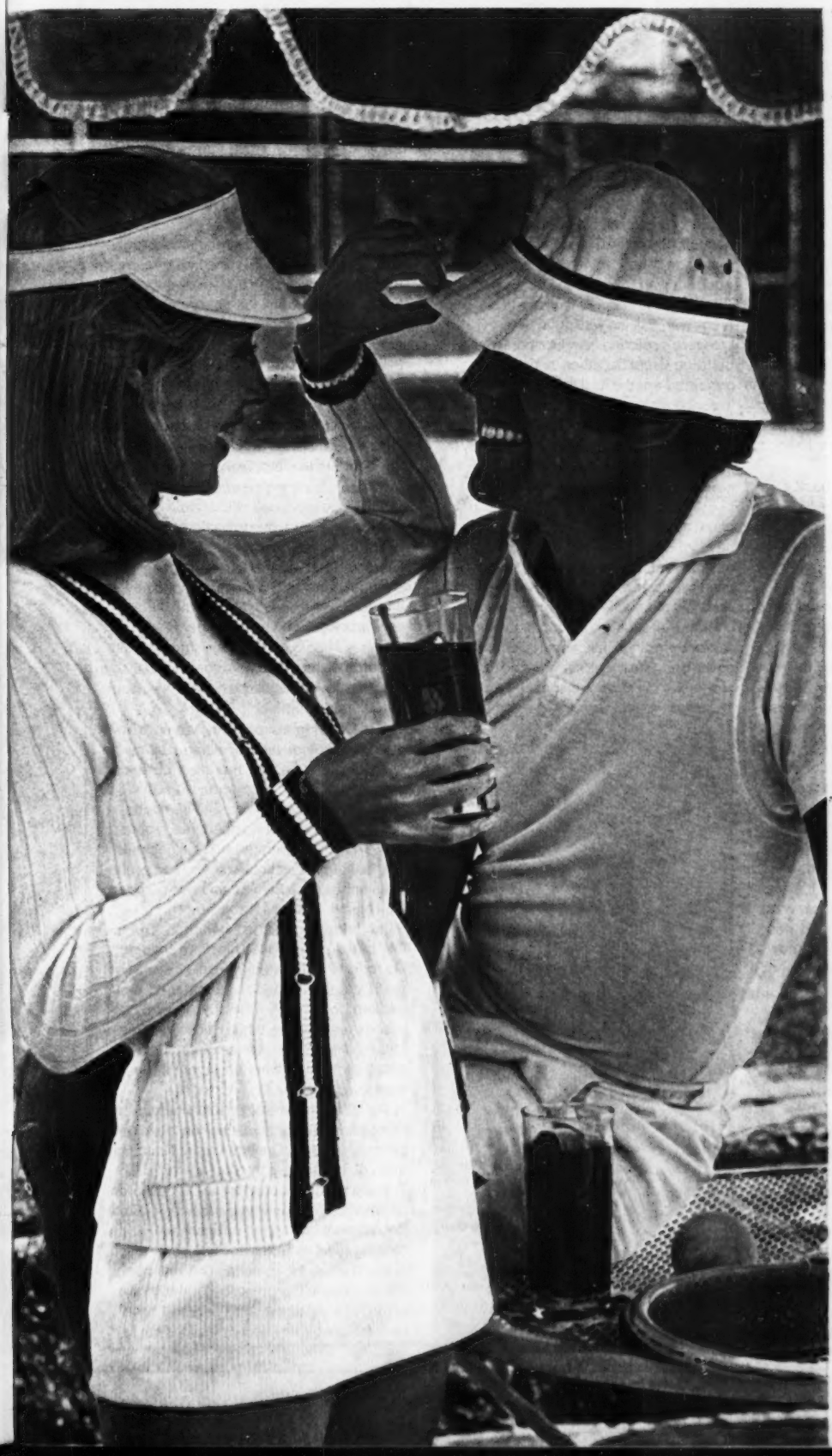
"Law Day" is *precisely* a reaction to "the high festival of a rival culture," the culture of the people. May 1 was "Law Day, U.S.A." because it used to be a people's holiday. ●

elektra

By Stuart Hample & Seymour Chwast


MOST HUMBLE APOLOGIES, PRESIDENT THIEU, NO ONION IN ENTIRE PALM SPRINGS FOR MARTINI ...ONLY OLIVE.
MR. PRESIDENT, THE CHARTER JET REFUSES TO TAKE OFF FOR SWITZERLAND WITH YOUR 200 CASES OF GOLD BULLION UNLESS YOU PAY IN ADVANCE!
THE SACRAMENTO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE WANTS YOU TO SPEAK NEXT TUESDAY AND WONDERS WHAT YOUR FEE IS.
SIR, THE PEOPLE OF VIETNAM SEND YOU FELICITATIONS, AND ASSURE YOU THEY ANTICIPATE WITH HAPPY HEARTS YOUR TRIUMPHANT RETURN TO YOUR RIGHTFUL PLACE AT THE HELM OF THE SHIP OF STATE!
GOD DAMN IT! I SAID ORION!
WE INTERRUPT THIS PROGRAM TO ANNOUNCE THAT PRESIDENT GERALD R. FORD HAS GRANTED FORMER PRESIDENT NGUYEN VAN THIEU A FULL AND ABSOLUTE PARDON.
C'MON IN!

CAMPARI INSTEAD.



You're about to have your usual after-the-match drink. But you're in the mood for something different. So you have Campari & Tonic instead.

A long, cool drink of Campari & Tonic makes a satisfying thirst-quencher any afternoon or evening. And it's the perfect light drink before lunch or dinner.

That unique, tongue-tingling flavor of Campari is a refreshing change from the drink you ask for out of habit. Soon you may even find yourself getting into a new habit: having Campari instead.

Campari & Tonic...Pour a jigger (1½ oz.) of Campari over ice in a tall glass. Fill with **Schweppes Tonic Water.** Squeeze in a wedge of lemon or lime, if desired.

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Fables and lies

FULMINATIONS

By Larry L. King

Now that the bloody bubble's burst in Southeast Asia, have we learned—at long last—that we cannot win on foreign soil, in what essentially are civil wars, unless we have the people of the affected countries with us? Have we learned that "the people" will not support us as long as we attempt to preserve corrupt or indifferent regimes that are under attack because of their own shortcomings? Since the turn of the century, Uncle Sam has had opportunities to assimilate these basics; apparently, he learned nothing.

Though the fact is downplayed in our history books, we supplied troops—as did other Western nations and Japan—against the Bolsheviks during the October Revolution in Russia; the great peacemaker Woodrow Wilson made this possible. Our troops drilled, marched and drank with White Russian forces, while waiting for the people to rise against the Red army. But the people did not do so in sufficient numbers, largely because of their misery and terror under czarism. This lesson was lost in the heady vapors following World War II; when we presumed our might so great that all other considerations became secondary, we were free to err in Korea.

If Korea did not prove to be the total disaster of Southeast Asia two decades later, it was still a costly preview. In the end, though the government of South Korea was preserved, nothing near to democracy was. To this day, those South Koreans who grow critical of their government are imprisoned or simply disappear. The members of my generation who died there gave their lives for worthless causes, and Uncle Sam got a black eye.

In Cuba, too, the story line ran that the people would rise to smite Fidel Castro once "the good guys" came. This fable discounted the brutalities, corruptions and abject poverty sponsored by the Batista reign. It took the Bay of Pigs to make us understand it. Or did we? It remained for Southeast Asia to again drive home the lesson—at a cost of 55,000 American lives, billions of dollars and our present economic recession rooted in the inflationary spirals of the Vietnam years.

More than in all prior wars, thanks to television, we private citizens received our early warnings of the making of a quagmire. From the earliest days of Camelot, we were treated to much official rubbish: the invincibility of the Green Berets, the expertise of our "advisers" teaching a new guerrilla warfare certain to fatally punish the Vietcong, the enemy's lack of will or firepower. But life was good here. We were exploring New Frontiers and building Great Societies, and so we remained apathetic. It took the college kids to sound history's alarm. For this they were beaten in Chicago, shot at Kent State and Jackson State and jailed elsewhere. By the time the rest of us got off our duffs and howled, the demon was loose.

In mitigation, private citizens may claim not to have had the full facts; not to have made or known of the many major miscalculations permitting our longest, most costly and most fruitless war. By now we know of countless careless—or criminal—misdeeds among high officials: secret bombings, fake reports, official cover-ups. But it took a horror tale in the May issue of *Harper's* magazine to chill my bones and brain to the full realization of official insanities.

It is the work of Sam Adams, a former CIA man, who in 1965—when we *already* had 200,000 troops in the war—was tardily assigned as the first full-time intelligence analyst in Washington researching enemy strength in Vietnam. Where the Pentagon—and the White House—acted on the assumption that Vietcong strength could not exceed 270,000, Adams soon found that in most cases we underestimated the strength of their fighting units by three-fold to ten-fold. Working from *available documents earlier filed away and ignored,* he exploded official pipe dreams: that the Vietcong, due to battle losses and desertions, could not hold out two more years. Indeed, Adams found Vietcong strength constantly growing despite all attritions. He found that where the official estimate was 300 Vietcong agents infiltrated into South Vietnam's government apparatus, the figure was closer to 30,000. In short, he found our cause hopeless and our calculations tragic.

One might expect Mr. Adams to have been proclaimed a national hero. But no. The CIA didn't want his reports circulated outside the agency: they didn't fit with Official Versions, you see. The Pentagon complained on hearing of Adams' reports; the CIA then cooperated with the generals in knocking his estimates down, and at one such conference Sam Adams was branded "full of shit." He was harassed, intimidated, isolated in meaningless jobs. CIA bigwigs prohibited him from sending his reports to the White House; when he bristled and refused to be threatened, they backed down. But—incredible—once the reports reached the White House, neither LBJ men nor Nixon men accepted them or acted on them. Adams, his career in shambles, resigned.

The men who opposed him? Well, a number are in higher places now. Read and be comforted: Lt. General Daniel Graham is head of the Defense Intelligence Agency; Edward Proctor is chief of the CIA research directorate; William Hyland is head of State Department Intelligence. These men, helping feed us fables and lies, grew fat off them. Though the so-called CIA watchdog committees in Congress long have known of the Adams Report, not a bark has been heard. No wonder history's lessons fail to take. ●

ILLUSTRATION BY RICHARD EGIELSKI

How to get hot and cold flashes.

First, buy a bottle of fine imported Cuervo (Gold) Especial. Second, put it in your freezer. Retire peacefully for the night.

Upon arising, conduct yourself normally until the hottest part of the day. Usually about 2 P.M. And now you are ready. Set out as many rock glasses as there are people participating, then all run around the block twice. (or until hot.)

Now, take the bottle of Cuervo Especial from the freezer and pour 2 oz. into each glass. Simple huh?

Then just sip the nice cold gold.

This is called "getting hot and cold flashes".

Should you oversleep, this works just as well on a good, hot, muggy night.

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Why Rocky apologized to the Senate;
Hunter Thompson's $28,000 binge

THE INSIDER

EDITED BY TONY SCHWARTZ

POWER POLITICS

To know is to slow

The Senate as the world's great deliberative body? Consider this perspective from Finance Committee Chairman Russell Long (D-La.), offered during recent hearings on the tax cut bill:

"If every senator insists on knowing what he's voting for before he votes, we're not going to get a bill out before Monday."

UPI

Long: short on patience

Rocking the boat

Two weeks ago, Nelson Rockefeller surprised Congress and the rest of the nation by making a public apology to Republican conservatives in the Senate. These were the same senators he had defiantly ruled against on the filibuster issue two months earlier. Why an apology? And why two months later? The answer is simple. Just a few days before his remarkable mea culpa, Rocky received the results of a poll he himself had commissioned of the delegates to the 1972 Republican National Convention. The findings startled the Vice-President's camp on two counts. First, an overwhelming majority of the delegates favored throwing the '76 Republican Convention open on the question of Ford's vice-presidential running mate. Second, Rocky ran a poor third to Ronald Reagan and Barry Goldwater among those delegates ready to state a preference for vice-president.

Rocky's advisers warned him that at least 50 percent of the delegates—and perhaps more—would be returning in '76. Even with Ford's expected strong backing, the specter of a convention revolt against Rockefeller looms large and aides say privately that the Senate apology represents a first gesture to the Republican right. Now watch for similar overtures to conservatives during the coming months, including hard-line speeches on foreign and defense policy, and conservative talks on certain domestic issues.

Filing for dollars

A number of Democratic presidential hopefuls are having trouble raising the money necessary to qualify for federal primary funds. So far, only Sen. Henry Jackson and Governor George Wallace have been able to reach the magic figure of $5,000—gathered in contributions of $250 or less—from each of 20 states. Matching primary funds up to $5 million are available to qualifying candidates who file under the Campaign Finance Act. The next closest contender is Sen. Lloyd Bentsen of Texas, who has qualified in 11 states but has been stalled at that figure for more than two months. The more liberal candidates—Fred Harris of Oklahoma, Jimmy Carter of Georgia and Morris Udall of Arizona—have been unable to line up more than a handful of the necessary states. Udall, for example, has qualified only in his home state and in New York.

Berrying Watergate

The case isn't exactly newsworthy but its attorneys are. Last month, James St. Clair (he was Nixon's silver-tongued Watergate lawyer) showed up in Madison, Wisconsin. Turns out he's defending Ocean Spray, the cranberry

FRED WARD/BLACK STAR

St. Clair: fruits of Watergate

producers, in an antitrust suit apparently long delayed by the Watergate affair. And delayed not only because St. Clair was occupied in Washington. His Wisconsin adversary these days is Richard Cates, who is defending the plaintiff, Cranberry Products. You say Cates' name doesn't ring a bell either? Well, he was the original majority staff counsel for the House Judiciary Committee's impeachment investigation.

Primary concerns

Massachusetts Democratic leaders are acting to nullify New Hampshire's traditional first presidential primary advantage. The move is aimed both at muting right wing publisher William Loeb's national political power and at eliciting a broader sample of voter sentiment than New Hampshire's 60,000 Democrats now provide. The Massachusetts legislature is planning to move back its presidential primary to the same day as New Hampshire's, and it is urging Rhode Island to do the same. The effect would be to create a

kind of regional primary, something which appeals to candidates because it conserves both time and money. The bill has the support of the Massachusetts governor, lieutenant governor and House speaker. Although New Hampshire is unlikely to go down without a fight, Massachusetts State Senate President Kevin Harrington is confident the bill will pass in whatever form assures that his state's primary will be as early as New Hampshire's: "We can hold it at half time during the Rose Bowl if necessary."

THE WORD

Uncovering Patty

Patty Hearst is about to achieve a dubious immortality. Already overexposed, Patty's story is due to be fleshed out in two separate pornographic movies late this summer.

The screenplay of Kent Carroll's X-rated *Abduction* is based on *Black Abductor*, a novel about an heiress named Patricia who is ransomed by revolutionaries. By an astonishing coincidence, the book was written in 1972, almost 20 months before the real kidnapping. (Some even say the book may have inspired the kidnapping.) For the title role in *Patty*, look-alike Sarah Nicholson was chosen shortly after a New York cop stopped her on the street, convinced he'd captured the real Patty Hearst. The 22-year-old actress has had an ample skin-flick apprenticeship ("I've been whipped, burned, even raped on a cake of ice") but nothing that prepared her for the fantasized reenactment of Patty's conversion to the SLA at the film's conclusion. Nicholson lies naked while a genuine 15-foot python—modeled after the symbolic seven-headed SLA cobra—coils around her body and flicks its tongue at her face.

GEORGE BERNARD

Nicholson: looking Patty's part

All sounds tame compared to the real story—whatever it turns out to be.

MEDIA

Figuring Jackie

What might Jackie Kennedy's memoirs be worth? More than anyone else's for starters. Top publishing executives and literary agents generally agree that Jackie's story—told candidly—is potentially the most valuable literary property around. Her memoirs could potentially command more money than those of Henry Kissinger, recluse Howard Hughes, actress Elizabeth Taylor and even former President Nixon.

TED COWELL/BLACK STAR

Jackie: what her memoirs are worth

Hard-cover rights would go in the neighborhood of $1 million, according to a random industry poll. But that might be only the beginning. Paperback, serialization and book club rights—and perhaps even a movie—could push that figure, as one publisher put it, into "an astronomical range." Said another: "Let's face it, she's been center stage in the world of politics, society and finance since 1960. Who else could make that claim?"

The question, of course, is whether Jackie will decide to write memoirs, and at least one person in a position to predict thinks she might. Delacorte Press' Eleanor Friede edited *One Special Summer*, the book Jackie did recently with her sister Lee Radziwill, about a summer in their childhood. "Jackie is a very creative person," says Friede, "and I'd have to say it depends entirely on what's happening in her life. She's very private, but after all, she can write, she has a story and it could very possibly happen."

Booking Ford

One person whose story doesn't spark much publishing excitement is our current President, and it looks as if there won't be a political biography of Jerry Ford out before the '76 campaign. In the midst of a recent spate of biographies about presidents, the only two written about Ford were by old friends, and neither one was particularly hard-hitting. Nonetheless, when two respected reporters approached a series of New York publishers last fall with a proposal for a critical Ford biography, no one was biting. Saul Friedman and Remer Tyson, Washington correspondent and chief political writer for the *Detroit Free Press*, respectively, finally convinced the University of Michigan Press to take on the project. Now that Ford has held up once-promised access to his vice-presidential papers, UM Press has backed off as well. Friedman speculates that the papers may contain embarrassing details about Ford's abortive congressional attempt to impeach Supreme Court Justice William Douglas, which the President may now want to keep under wraps. Says one publisher, bluntly: "That's about the only interesting thing he's done. Frankly, there isn't much personality there."

The fight to write

Rolling Stone editor Jann Wenner's indulgence with Hunter Thompson is understandable. Every time a by-lined Thompson piece appears, the

UPI

Thompson: splurge but no story

magazine picks up as many as 40,000 extra readers. So it was OK when Thompson spent $28,000 in expenses covering the Ali-Foreman fight in Zaire. It was even OK that on fight night Thompson was sitting by the pool at Zaire's Intercontinental Hotel, staring in stoned bliss at a full moon while Ali dispensed with Foreman. But what might not be OK is that, nearly seven months later, Thompson has not written a word about his African sojourn. The story goes that upon his return to the U.S., where he presumably saw a replay of the fight, Thompson had one of his legendary bouts with writer's block. Now it seems possible that the piece may never make it into print. Asked for his reaction to the entire affair, *Rolling Stone* editor Wenner was tight-lipped: "Just quote me as chuckling."

Star gazing

Gay Talese, Jimmy Breslin and Tom Wolfe all writing again for a daily newspaper? Sounds like déjà vu, but that's the latest project Washington *Star* editor James Bellows has planned as part of an effort to make the *Star* more competitive with the *Post*. As Bellows envisions it, writers would come to Washington—between books—for two to three month stretches. They would have the freedom to do long pieces on subjects of their own choosing. If preliminary talks are successful, Breslin will be the first "writer in residence" this summer, followed by Wolfe in the fall and Talese sometime after he finishes his much-talked-about book on sex next year. Bellows also hopes to lure to Washington such novelists as Joyce Carol Oates and John Gardner. "I think it's a very good idea to bring in outsiders and rotate them," says Talese. "The idea of being back on a daily newspaper for a couple of months appeals to me."

WIDE WORLD

Talese: "writer-in-residence"?

SEVENTIES

Tower power

For the record books:

The world's highest free-standing structure is now in Canada. Last month, Toronto's lakefront Canadian National Tower exceeded 1,824 feet, well beyond the previous mark of 1,748 feet held by the Ostankino Tower in Moscow.

UPI

CN Tower: biggest of all

The United States pales by comparison. In Chicago the Sears Building is expected to reach 1,450 feet; the New York World Trade Center stands at 1,353 feet. An old standard bearer, the Empire State in midtown Manhattan, seems only a baby giant at 1,250 feet.

Potshots

The dope shortage that Southern Californians have been complaining about lately is no coincidence. In an attempt to stem the flow of marijuana (and heroin) into the U.S. during the harvest season's height, the Mexican government has supplemented border patrols with a series of roadblocks around major cities. Known as Operation Roadblock (and not to be confused with the U.S.-funded and Nixon-inspired Operation Intercept back in 1970), the program is allegedly Mexican-funded. A spokesman for the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, which is helping run the operation, recently told a San Diego newscaster that in a selected two-week period, when the average amount of grass taken in at the border amounts to 6,000 pounds, the haul dwindled to 150. Which means, one supposes, that the program is either a very successful deterrent or a big bust.

Borderline practices

What's the Ku Klux Klan up to these days? Seems they've found a new group to place atop their hate list: aliens. The Klan is now planning to focus its efforts on illegal immigration into the U.S., with special emphasis on the Mexican border.

According to KKK Executive Director David Duke, a 24-year-old Louisiana State University graduate, the Klan plans a series of demonstrations at the San Diego/Tijuana border to protest illegal entry of immigrants. Duke claims KKK membership is up, although he recently declined to cite figures, claiming Klan policy prohibits him from doing so. However, Duke did point out that the issue of aliens should be attractive to a large group of potential Klan members. "The American white middle class is tired of becoming second class citizens in terms of discrimination in jobs, scholarships and promotions." Not coincidentally, that's the same line the Klan used when it helped spearhead demonstrations against busing last fall, particularly in Boston.

ILLUSTRATION BY DENIS ORLOFF

EDUCATION

When teaching has no class

American higher education is in deep trouble.

After two decades of rapidly increasing graduate enrollments, universities have turned a shortage of PhDs into a staggering surplus. By 1985, the National Science Foundation estimates there will be a surplus of 100,000 PhDs in the science and engineering fields alone. Overall, experts believe as few as 20 percent of new PhDs will be able to find jobs as teachers by 1982-83.

The problem is exacerbated by the fact that the colleges and universities, which not too long ago hired many new professors to teach hordes of entering undergraduates, are no longer growing. By the 1980s, across-the-board declines in undergraduate enrollments are expected, as the WW II baby boom students are replaced by the much smaller group born during the population-conscious '60s.

The PhD and undergraduate crises may necessitate radical solutions. Reduced graduate admissions coupled with more non-academic placements for PhDs are two likely alternatives. As for undergraduate institutions, many are already gearing up recruiting efforts (particularly overseas), using direct-mail campaigns, magazine ads and scholarship enticements. More popular is the switch to vocational courses in the hope of attracting a new population of part-time, older and more job-conscious students.

POST SCRIPTS

Giving aerosols the shake (March 7, 1975)

Question: Is there anything one can do about fluorocarbons, the chemical used in many aerosol products that is now threatening the earth's ozone layer?

Answer: Yes!

The first thing to do is stop using aerosols. Because few products list the nature of their propellants (some, such as food products and shaving creams, use hydrocarbons rather than fluorocarbons), the best thing is to avoid them all. There are now non-aerosol alternatives in nearly all categories—pump sprays for products such as window cleaners and hair sprays (Clinique, for instance);roll-ons for deodorants; and pastes, waxes and polishes for house products.

The next action you can take is to write your congressperson. Bills have been submitted to the Science and Industry and to the Health and Environment subcommittees. Representatives on either one will be

JEANIE BLACK

Aerosol alternatives

the most influential in the early stages. Both bills—HR 3118 and HR 3916—would allocate funds for study of the issue by NASA and the National Academy of Sciences. HR 3118 would ban fluorocarbons (also known as Freon) unless evidence of harm to the ozone layer were refuted. HR 3916 would mandate a reduction in Freon production big enough to end the threat to the ozone layer. Other agencies in Washington with influence on the aerosol issue are the Consumer Products Safety Commission, the Federal Drug Administration and the Environmental Protection Agency. Information on the aerosol threat can be obtained by writing the Natural Resources Defense Council at 15 W. 40th Street, N.Y., N.Y. 10036.

One other group, STRAFE, a coalition of law students at George Washington University in Washington, D.C., points out that *all* aerosol products are a bad consumer buy. The reason is that so much of each can's contents is propellant. The group estimates that with few exceptions products are 50 percent propellant and more, and that certain feminine hygiene sprays go as high as 95 percent propellant. In addition, the cost of the unrecyclable cans is passed on to consumers. STRAFE has petitioned the FTC to require manufacturers to include the amount and percentage of propellant on all cans.

SHOCKING!

This is the cover of a publication published in California. It was first printed in 1965, yet this issue still sells several thousand copies each year—*without advertising* until now! Until now because this magazine by its very nature offended all prudes and censorship groups. Even now with the present day intelligent attitude toward censorship it is impossible for this ad to have our name, or any of our naughty copy and illustrations, *but it does have a message for you.* There IS a magazine that you will treasure and save and reread and show to your friends. A magazine that will be mailed to you by first class mail in a plain sealed envelope. There are four issues of this magazine-book available, each issue the result of over a year's work by its two creators, one artist and one writer. This is not a slick, trite magazine full of ads and recipes, this is a gutslammer of a magazine that believes nothing is sacred and that mankind is in trouble. This is a satirical magazine, this is a sex magazine, this is an adult magazine for readers with adult minds. You don't save the 'slick' magazines you buy, now is the time to buy a magazine you will save. It never goes out of date. Its initials are HS. Send $5 for two issues or save time (and get a free cartoon book) by ordering all four available issues for $10. Mailed in plain sealed envelopes.
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Some recent roars.

Every two weeks, NEW TIMES comes along with a stick or two of dynamite in its fist.

There was our story on "The Ten Dumbest Congressmen," with NEW TIMES' nomination for King of Dumb. You should have heard the screams on that one, including a well-attended press conference called by the King himself. There was "Prescription Payola," about doctors who are willing to risk your life for a color TV. There was "Southie Is My Home Town," a look at the people of South Boston you didn't find in any of the other media. (After a century of getting the shaft, maybe they had reasons for coming off as brawling racists.)

In "The Little Camera That Couldn't," NEW TIMES dissected Polaroid's SX-70, as a symbol of a consumer economy gone wild. In "A Wallace Is a Wallace Is a Wallace," we looked underneath the new moderate George and found—guess what—the same old George. In "Happy Days Are Here Again," we saw the new depression as upbeat—a chance for new lifestyles and the whole Whole Earth thing. In "Zen and the Art of the Perfect Backhand," we told you how to trust your body and ignore your old tennis instructor.

"The Gourmet Freeze-Out" ripped the foil off the big restaurant rip-off that's serving up mass-produced frozen dishes as expensive house specialties. "The Consulting Con Game" laid bare a cushy professorial racket. "They Shoot Ten-Year Olds, Don't They?" was a heartwarming look at New York's shootin' cops with their 007 license to kill just about anybody they want to. "That Championship Season" stripped the cover-up from the sex scandal that decimated Notre Dame's football team.

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And of course we continue to report on the eternal battle of The Little Guys vs. The Big Guys. Like the story on Sam Lovejoy, who toppled the big bad nuclear tower. And the young hillbillies of Mendocino County who were damned if they'd let their houses be torn down for lack of city plumbing.

Our bright, brash, talented writers and columnists—like Robert Sam Anson, Jesse Kornbluth, Marcia Seligson, Larry King, Amanda Spake, Jim Kunen, Mark Goodman, Frank Rich, Janet Maslin and Nina Totenberg—have one thing in common. They're unafraid. They'll plunge into anything, take chances and stands, crawl way out on limbs. Sure, NEW TIMES may fall on its face sometimes. But never on its knees!

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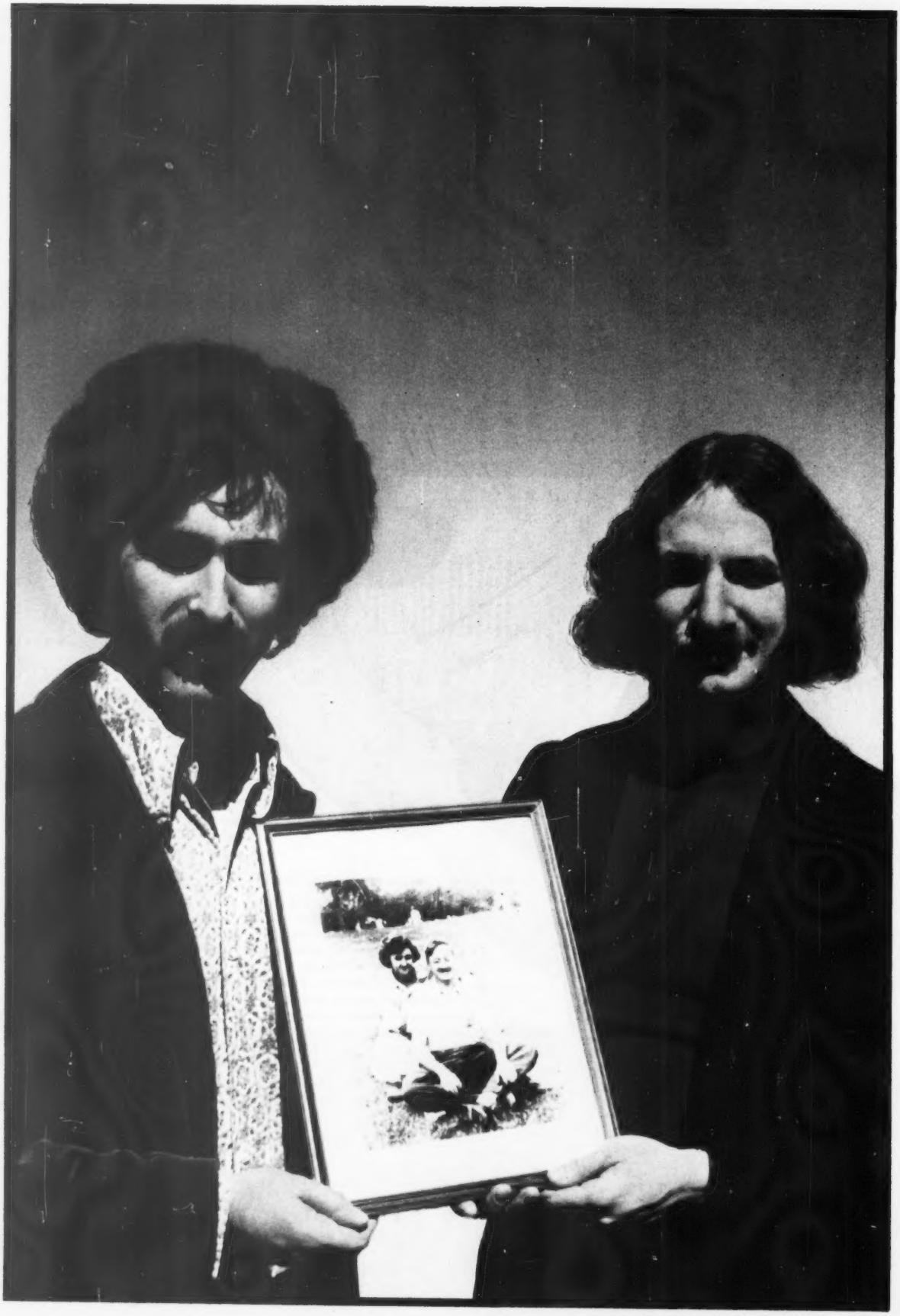

Victims of a desperate age

By Daniel Yergin

The attorney, speaking at a meeting in New Haven, gestured toward a bearded young man named Michael Meeropol, who was sitting impassively, as though in a witness box. "When this young man walked into my office," said the attorney, "I realized that he was virtually the same age as his father had been when arrested." The lawyer paused. The room was silent. "It made the bristles run on the back of my neck. It made me realize what a curse this case has been on all of us."

Ethel and Julius Rosenberg, the parents of the young man now named Meeropol, were arrested in 1950 and convicted nine months later of passing the secret of the atomic bomb to the Russians. The case aroused bitter passions not only in the United States but throughout the world, and remains today the most famous spy case in all of American history. Despite an open telephone line to the death hall in case of last-minute confessions, the Rosenbergs went to the electric chair in 1953 proclaiming their innocence; and America, its mind made up, closed the book on the case, ready to forget.

Now, however, like an apparition, the case has risen again to trouble the American conscience. Again it figures in the press and in the courts, it is again the subject of heated discussions and fervid meetings. A recent gathering of 2,500 Rosenberg supporters in the Civic Auditorium in Santa Monica, California, where the Academy Award Show plays every year, was disrupted by a tear gas attack by persons unknown. It's almost like old times.

But why has this curse returned?

Partly, it is because of the sons. Since 1957, Michael, now 32, and Robert, 27, lived in anonymity, protected by their adopted parents, the Meeropols. Then, in 1973, famous trial lawyer Louis Nizer, who celebrated himself in *My Life in Court* and *The Jury Returns*, published a flashy, pretentious best seller about the case, *The Implosion Conspiracy*—an effective melodrama but hardly a serious or reliable history. Nizer suggested that the two sons had repudiated their parents, and also, in a sloppy move for a top lawyer, quoted extensively from letters the Rosenbergs had written to each other and the boys. It was Nizer's book that finally made the sons abandon their anonymity so that they could sue him for breach of copyright and invasion of privacy, and that experience in turn sparked them to campaign for a reopening of the case. Their book, *We Are Your Sons*, part history, part memoir of what it was like to grow up as the sons of Ethel and Julius, will be published shortly. It is a moving and gripping work, apparently destined for the best seller list.

It's been 22 years since Ethel and Julius Rosenberg died in the electric chair, but their memory still inspires fierce passions. Now—with their sons about to publish a book in their defense—questions about "The Spy Story of the Century" are more insistent than ever

But, in addition to the son's efforts, the case takes on new interest because of the changes in our national life; the Cold War has eased, the anti-communist consensus has collapsed, old taboos about radicalism have broken down, and America, however painfully, has learned to tolerate broader ranges of opinion. Watergate, moreover, has corrupted our faith in the sanctity and essential goodness of our institutions. One refuge of those troubled by this case had always been the assumption that the government would not lie, that law enforcement agencies would not fabricate evidence; we can no longer accept such assumptions. In recent weeks a whole torrent of disturbing information about FBI practices has come out; its agents, it seems, have not shied away from forging letters, faking death threats, planting informers who functioned as agents provocateurs, even kidnapping in the "inter-

PHOTOGRAPH BY RICHARD BALZER

ests" of national security. How much further would the Bureau have moved into illegality and fabrication when the spy mania was at its height and J. Edgar Hoover was in total control?

And, finally, the evidence that has dribbled out over the last two decades has raised more and more questions about the verdict. Two of the most important atomic scientists, to whom I showed the key prosecution exhibits, declared, on that evidence, that the Rosenbergs—whatever they did or did not do—certainly did not steal the secret of the atomic bomb. Unless the $2 billion atomic bomb could be reduced to a child's drawing!

The implications of all this are deeply disturbing. As we unravel the case, we will come to see that one of the most important and dramatic cases in our history might come to a final conclusion with a judgment of "wrongful death."

The world's first atomic device was detonated atop a steel tower in the New Mexico desert on July 16, 1945. A second atomic device, this a bomb nicknamed "Little Boy," exploded a hundred feet over Hiroshima on August 6, 1945, destroying the city. Mankind had entered the Atomic Age. The United States chose to hold the bomb as a "trust" for the rest of humanity.

How long could America maintain its monopoly? Scientists, familiar with what it actually took to make a bomb, tended to think that the Russians could develop a bomb in as little as four years. But politicians and the public, thinking that the bomb was a product of Yankee ingenuity, assumed it would take the Russians much longer—15 years, 20 years, perhaps more.

In September 1949 Harry Truman announced: "We have evidence that within recent weeks an atomic explosion occurred within the U.S.S.R." Americans were shocked; the Russian weapon exploded their sense of security, and left behind, as fallout, a feeling of acute vulnerability.

The Russian bomb, Joe I, had immediate consequences in the United States in the form of a build-up in America's military establishment, including the go-ahead for development of a much more powerful hydrogen bomb. Then, in June 1950, the Cold War turned hot with the Korean conflict. U.S. leaders saw that war as Soviet-instigated—an act that the Russians would not have dared had they not possessed an atomic bomb.

The Soviet test, the increasing militance and finally the Korean War all fueled the spy hysteria, the witch-hunting and search for scapegoats, that afflicted communists, former communists and non-communists alike. Congressmen, prosecutors and investigators dashed off on a mad treasure hunt, in Washington and Hollywood and all across the country, in an effort to outdo one another in uncovering traitors. Evidence was not overly required; to name and be named was enough. The careers and lives of many of the named were destroyed; others, hunters like the young Richard Nixon and Senator Joe McCarthy, made their careers by spearing names.

Of course, there were real spies, real atomic spies. One such was Klaus Fuchs, who had fled Germany in 1933, become a British citizen, gone to work on the Manhattan Project (the atomic bomb development) in the United States between 1943 and 1946, and then returned to Britain for further atomic research. The tense, high-strung theoretical physicist had participated in top-level discussions on the bomb's progress during the war. In February 1950 Fuchs was arrested by British authorities—on an informant's tip relayed by the FBI—and readily confessed to passing atomic information to the Russians. What kind of information remains unknown. On March 1, 1950, Fuchs was sentenced to 14 years in an English prison.

Judge Kaufman bought the government case 100 percent. He was, says a friend, "an idolator of Hoover"

The Fuchs confession had immediate consequences in the United States, especially at the Federal Bureau of Investigation. "There was always pressure in the FBI, whether you were working on criminal cases or not," recalls Robert Lamphere, the former FBI agent who helped direct the Rosenberg case. "That was the kind of operation Hoover ran." But once Fuchs confessed, pointing to an American connection, "a lot more pressure came down to the various levels. The only word from Hoover was, 'I want that man found, I want him found fast, and I don't care what it costs.' " In Hoover's tyrannical kingdom, that was more than an order. It was a "sub-tel" case—all clues and leads from all over the country rushed back to the top FBI men by teletype—the same kind of massive investigation as those following the Kennedy assassination and the Patty Hearst kidnapping. In May of 1950 Fuchs was said to have provided the FBI with the crucial link of information.

On July 17, 1950, a 32-year-old engineer named Julius Rosenberg was arrested in his home, while his older son Michael listened to the Lone Ranger on radio, and was charged with participating in an espionage conspiracy. A little less than a month later, his wife, Ethel, 34, was arrested on the same charge. Ethel and Julius, both the children of poor Jewish immigrants, had grown up in poverty on New York's Lower East Side. Like many of the Depression generation in America, the couple had turned sharply to the Left; they probably were members of the Communist Party. Shortly after their marriage, Julius went to work as a junior engineer for the government's Signal Corps. Their first son, Michael, was born in 1943; the second, Robert, in 1947. In 1945 Julius was fired from the Signal Corps for communist associations. He went to work for a private firm, and then became a partner in a small machine shop. One of the other partners was Ethel's younger brother, David Greenglass.

Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were charged with masterminding an espionage ring that had spirited the atomic secret out of the United States to the Soviet Union. On trial with them was another engineer, Morton Sobell, accused of being part of the espionage ring but not with participating in the atomic theft. The case was called the Spy Story of the Century, and the prosecution maintained that this trial would lead to an even larger spy ring. It never did.

The trial opened in the U.S. District Court in New York City on March 6, 1951, under Judge Irving R. Kaufman—at 40, one of the youngest men on the federal bench. Judge Kaufman now sits as chief of the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, just below the U.S. Supreme Court; it is no secret among his friends that the judge's great ambition is to ascend to that last top rung. Today, he is known as a liberal, intelligent judge—but some of his friends feel that his career since has been an expiation for his handling of the Rosenberg trial. For Kaufman bought the prosecution's case 100 percent. In sentencing the

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Daniel Yergin is a research fellow at Harvard. His book, The Rise of the National Security State, *will be published by Houghton Mifflin.*

A family torn apart: Michael, 9, and Robert, 5, after a 1953 visit with their parents at Sing Sing Prison.

Rosenbergs to death, he declared: "Your conduct in putting into the hands of the Russians the A-bomb years before our best scientists predicted Russia would perfect the bomb has caused, in my opinion, the Communist aggression in Korea with the resultant casualties exceeding 50,000 and who knows but that millions of innocent people may pay the price of your treason." Throughout the trial, Kaufman was consistently hard on the defense lawyers, much more sympathetic to the prosecution.

Some believe that Kaufman was enraged by the "stain of treason" he felt the Rosenbergs had brought on Jews—his wife's own maiden name, in fact, was Rosenberg. But it went beyond that, for Kaufman apparently identified strongly with the prosecution.

In 1947-48 Kaufman, a former U.S. attorney in New York, had taken time off from his lucrative law practice to go to Washington as a special assistant to the attorney general, in order to set up a Justice Department unit to control lobbyists. It is not generally known that Kaufman formed a special friendship while in the capital. "When he came to Washington as a relatively young lawyer," says a friend who has known Kaufman for decades, "he was utilizing the FBI for investigation, and he came to know J. Edgar Hoover. He talked a lot to Hoover, and was terribly moved by him. Kaufman became a great admirer, even an idolator of Hoover. I'm sure that long before the Rosenberg trial, Kaufman was absolutely convinced of the Communist menace to the United States. He was indoctrinated in it in the years preceding the Rosenberg case. Therefore, the government's position in that case fell on his receptive ears."

A former senior FBI official goes even further: "Kaufman was historically pro-Hoover. Hoover had sold him a bill of goods, and he was completely behind Hoover. Why, Hoover was like Jesus Christ to him."

The prosecution team, led by Irving Saypol, now a New York State Supreme Court justice, was top-flight, highly skilled in the art of interrogation. Among the assistant prosecutors was Roy M. Cohn, who shortly after the trial made a national name for himself as counsel—and chief Inquisitor—for Senator Joseph McCarthy. The defense, in contrast, was inexperienced and under-financed. The chief Rosenberg attorney was Emanuel Bloch, assisted by his father, Alexander Bloch, a 74-year-old lawyer who had specialized in the bakery business, and a young woman lawyer, Gloria Agrin.

Bloch was a knowledgeable constitutional and civil rights lawyer and his dedication to his cause was total. But there are those who claim he lacked trial law experience, and he was too polite and acquiescent during the trial. Gloria Agrin, the only surviving member of the legal team, puts it differently: "Bloch was an experienced trial lawyer," she recalls, "but he was working under tremendous handicaps. We had no way of even hiring investigators. He was improvising all the way through the trial. We couldn't even get a lawyer to come in to assist us at the trial. Bloch and I were isolated. Left-wing lawyers walked across the street when they saw us coming—they didn't want to be tarred by the spy brush. Bloch was working without fee. Both of us went broke. We lost our shirts."

The first part of the government's case centered not on the Rosenbergs but on Morton Sobell, who had been personally and politically sympathetic with the Rosenbergs. "We had a feeling of rapport and friendship," Mrs. Sobell told me. "We didn't meet with them very often, but we were friends—there was a sense of sharing." The prosecution charged that Sobell had shared in something more—in the espionage conspiracy, although not in the passing of the atomic secret.

To prove that connection, they called just one witness, Max Elitcher, a 32-year-old electrical engineer, who had been a high school and college classmate of Sobell's and had belonged to the same communist group in Washington until 1941. Elitcher's testimony had a will-o'-the-wisp quality to it—that, for instance, he had seen photographic equipment in the Sobell house, that once he had observed Sobell put some papers in his briefcase and carry them home. He also connected the invisible cords of the conspiracy to Julius Rosenberg, claiming that Julius had phoned him in 1944 (having not seen him since college six years earlier), come over to his home, requested that his wife leave the room, and asked him to commit espionage for the Soviet Union.

Elitcher had another dramatic story, again one based only on his own word: In 1948, while driving up from Washington, D.C., to look for a house, he had stopped over at the Sobell home. He told Sobell that he thought the FBI might have trailed him from Washington. Sobell, according to Elitcher, became furious at him for drawing attention to his own home—Sobell said he had some information "too valuable to be destroyed and yet too dangerous to keep around." So Sobell grabbed what Elitcher assumed was a can of film and drove off into the

night, accompanied by Elitcher, to the Rosenbergs' neighborhood in New York City. Sobell took the can of film from the car, leaving Elitcher in it, and returned a few minutes later—with no film can.

Yet why, if Sobell were so upset by Elitcher's having led FBI men to his home, would he then drive off, leading the FBI to yet another "conspirator"? Most importantly, Elitcher admitted that he had sworn falsely in a Loyalty Oath in 1947 that he had never been a Communist Party member. He said he had been "scared to death ever since" that he might be charged with conspiracy, and desperately wanted his security clearance back so that he could continue his work.

The cords tying Sobell to the conspiracy were truly invisible—only the words from Elitcher's mouth. The judge, in fact, instructed the jury that they should determine Sobell's guilt or innocence on the basis of their estimation of Elitcher's credibility. Sobell was convicted.

Elitcher was followed to the stand on March 9 by David Greenglass, a paunchy 29-year-old machinist, described by his attorney in a confidential conversation with an FBI agent as a "slob." Not only was he the most important witness but also the most sensational—for his testimony, more than anybody else's, sent his sister, Ethel Rosenberg, and her husband to the electric chair. In 1944, as a sergeant in the Army, he had been assigned to a tool shop at Los Alamos, the secret center for atomic bomb research. He described three episodes that were meant to prove that the Rosenbergs had masterminded the theft of the atomic secret:

In January 1945, home on leave in New York, he had told Julius about work on the bomb and passed on some sketches he had made. Julius went into the kitchen with David's wife, Ruth, and ripped a Jell-O box into two parts. One part he gave to Ruth, who put it into her wallet. The other part he kept for himself. His half would identify his courier.

Six months later, in June (Greenglass continued), a short man, unknown to him but named Harry Gold, knocked at the Greenglass apartment in New Mexico. "I come from Julius," Gold said (according to his own later testimony). Greenglass went to his wife's handbag and extracted from her wallet her segment of the Jell-O box. Gold produced the other half. They fitted perfectly. Gold was the courier of Soviet Vice-Counsel Yakovlev, who had somehow obtained the Jell-O carton from Rosenberg. Greenglass then prepared sketches of the so-called lens mold, as well as names of potential espionage recruits. Gold paid him $500.

Greenglass told how he had come home again on leave in September 1945. He informed Rosenberg on that visit that, by keeping his ear to the ground, he had found out the secret of the bomb. He whipped up a sketch of the bomb, as well as a 12-page commentary that included a description of the bomb and more names.

The prosecution introduced several sketches of the crucial lens mold, plus a sketch of the atomic bomb. These were not the originals—Greenglass had done them shortly before the trial—but they were said to be close replicas of his 1945 artwork. These sketches formed the basis of the charge that the Rosenbergs had pirated the bomb's secret.

The defense was overworked and under-informed. "We couldn't get to the scientists. No one would talk to us."

The prosecution called two witnesses to authenticate the sketch. Walter Koski, a physical chemist who had headed the section in which Greenglass had worked, agreed that the lens sketches were "reasonably accurate descriptions" of the experimental work and gave away the "principle. . . the idea." The other expert witness for the prosecution was John Derry of the Atomic Energy Commission. He said that the atom bomb sketch made clear the "actual construction" of the atomic bomb. It is difficult to ascertain whether or not Derry was an "expert." He told me that he had been "liaison officer for the production and the development of the atomic bomb" between General Groves, the head of the Manhattan Project, and the Los Alamos Laboratory. His degree was in electrical engineering, and before the war he had supervised the construction of railway tracks. He was, apparently, an engineering administrator. He certainly was *not* a scientist.

The defense could have struck hard at this "expert" testimony and at the sketches, but they were overworked and under-informed, knowing little of who was who at Los Alamos. "We couldn't get to the scientists," recalls Gloria Agrin. "No one would talk to us. We couldn't even get anybody to explain to us what a lens mold was—for all we knew, it was part of a camera. I had an old friend, a physicist, but not an atomic physicist, and we finally met her in a coffee shop, and she said, 'I think the mold relates to a detonation device.' We tried to get someone from Brooklyn Polytech to help us, but he said he'd have to think about it, and then came back and said, 'I can't talk to you.' "

Another question that the defense could have pushed concerned the credibility of Greenglass himself. He was a low-level machinist who at the age of 18 had failed eight out of eight courses in an abortive effort to begin college. But now, at the age of 23, the prosecution claimed, he could understand—as well as steal—the "secret" of the atomic bomb. "He was sharp and intelligent," maintains Roy Cohn. But Henry Linschitz, a physicist who headed a research section working on the lens experiments and one of the scientists who helped assemble the Nagasaki bomb, put the matter differently: "It is not possible in any technologically useful way to condense the results of a two-billion-dollar development effort into a diagram, drawn by a high-school graduate machinist on a single sheet of paper."

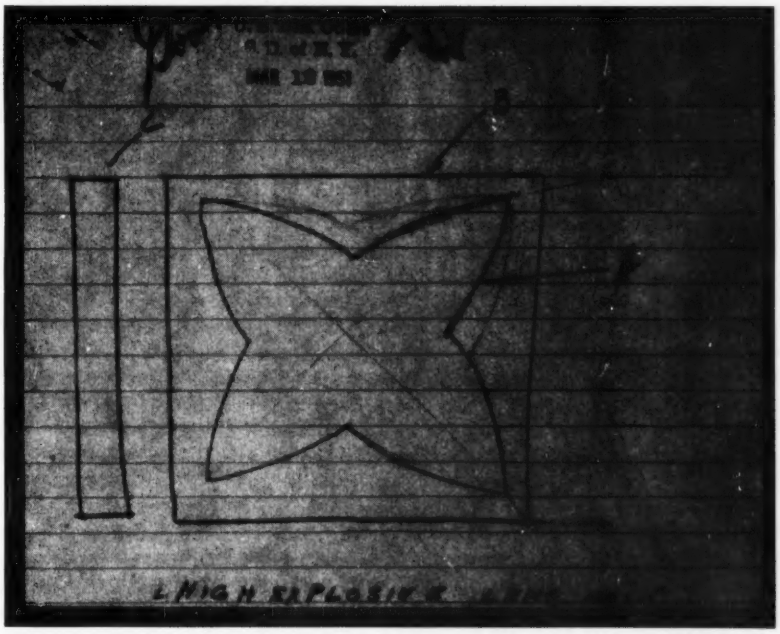
In the 1960s two historians, Walter and Miriam Schneir, succeeded in gaining access to and photocopying the sketches of the lens molds, which appear in their book *Invitation to an Inquest.* Sketch 8, however—the diagram of the atomic bomb itself—was impounded by the judge at the trial. After much legal hassle, beginning with a 1966 motion by Sobell's lawyers, Exhibit 8, the atomic bomb sketch, also became public, and a copy, along with Greenglass' explanation, appears in the revised edition of the Schneir book.

These sketches represent the heart of the prosecution's case. As prosecutor Saypol said in his summation: "We know that these conspirators stole the most important scientific secrets ever known to mankind from this country and delivered them to the Soviet Union."

Did they? It is only in recent years, with the publication of the sketches, that scientists can assess their worth.

I showed the reproductions of both the bomb and lens mold sketches to two distinguished scientists: George Kistiakowsky and Victor Weisskopf. Kistiakowsky—professor emeritus of chemistry at Harvard, explosives expert, science adviser to President Eisenhower—had directed the 600-man X (for explosives) division at Los Alamos, in which Greenglass had worked. Roy Cohn's own trial examination of Greenglass had established Kistiakowsky as the leading

authority in this area and sought to suggest Greenglass was a top assistant to him. Kistiakowsky's name was on the prosecution's list of witnesses to be called. But he was never called. Now we can presume why. Greenglass was at so low a level that, Kistiakowsky says, he "did not know him from Adam." Moreover, if Kistiakowsky had been called, he might well have completely knocked the underpinnings out from the prosecution's case. Greenglass' sketch, he now says, was "uselessly crude." Weisskopf, past president of the American Physical Society, recently retired chairman of the physics department at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and deputy leader of the Theoretical Division at Los Alamos, as well as mayor of that strange commu-



The lens mold sketch, the heart of the prosecution's case, was "uselessly crude."

nity, concurs. Weisskopf told me that Greenglass' sketch of the bomb was "ridiculous, a baby drawing, it doesn't tell you anything."

The opinions of these two experts on Greenglass' sketch of the crucial lens mold are just as significant. The key to the development of the implosion bomb (the type of atomic bomb used at Nagasaki) was in these lenses. They were high-explosive charges shaped so that the shock waves of the explosion traveled inward—hence implosion. Implosion devices had been used in explosives before the atomic bomb. The principle was known. But in the case of the atomic bomb, the lenses had to be constructed with great precision, ensuring that pressure came equally and simultaneously from all sides on the plutonium at the center so that this mass would reach supercriticality—thus setting off the chain reaction of the atomic explosion.

"How to make the lens was the trick," recalled Kistiakowsky; he estimates that the value of Greenglass' lens sketches, if they did go to Russia, would have been "almost nil."

The Russians themselves had impressive scientific credentials in this area. "The Russians," says Weisskopf, "are very good at shaped charges. In fact, they invented them. Russians had a very highly developed technique of shaped charges, and that [the implosion bomb] essentially is a shaped charge."

"There is no doubt," adds Kistiakowsky, "that much of the Russian effort was spontaneous. They had the general scientific background to undertake the development of the implosion weapon. Our work with high explosives was to a significant extent guided by a theoretical paper developing the theory of detonation, which was written by John Von Neumann at our request. It so happens that there was an identical theory, completely independently published in the Soviet Union about the same time, 1942 or early 1943." The Russians' primary problem, he adds, had been "not knowing whether the bomb was possible at all." The U.S. had solved that problem at Hiroshima.

I asked John Derry, recently retired from a long career with the Atomic Energy Commission, about his "expert" testimony as to the signal importance of the Greenglass sketch. "The sketch showed the principle of the atomic weapon," he insisted. "The sketch is a pretty crude sketch, but the fact at the time was that the implosion principle was highly classified."

I told him about my contrary discussion with Kistiakowsky regarding Russian strength and independent capability in this area. Derry simply replied: "He's certainly *the* expert in the explosive chemistry field."

Thus, on the basis of the evidence in court, the Rosenbergs did *not* steal the secret of the atomic bomb. But that does not mean that they were not members of an espionage conspiracy. And thus we must see how the prosecution continued to stretch out its conspiracy net—with Greenglass still providing the crucial testimony.

It became apparent, during the trial, that there had been no love lost between Greenglass and his brother-in-law, Julius Rosenberg.

On cross-examination, Greenglass admitted that relations had been rocky in the small engineering business into which he had gone with Julius after the war. He was not sure if he had or had not hit Julius during one argument. In the 1950s, while Greenglass was serving nine years in jail for his alleged part in the conspiracy, congressional investigators sometimes turned to him for further information; he told one group that Julius had had an agent working on the Aswan Dam—in 1948, years before the Aswan project was under way!

The other major prosecution witness was Harry Gold, a small, 40-year-old chemist, who provided the crucial link between Fuchs and the rest of the conspiracy. In May 1950 he confessed to being Fuchs' American courier and in December of that year received a 30-year prison sentence. At the Rosenberg trial, he described picking up various packets of papers from Fuchs and corroborated that crucial "I come from Julius" meeting with David and Ruth Greenglass in Albuquerque on June 3, 1945.

Rosenberg partisans have since charged that Gold was a dreamer, a man susceptible to suggestion and given to fantasies and fabrication. They point out that bachelor Gold made up a wife and two children for the benefit of one employer. He apparently was a man of changing stories. For instance, he had told his lawyers in 1950 that his Russian contact had told him that the information from Greenglass was of "no value," but months later at the Rosenberg trial, he maintained that his contact had pronounced it "extremely excellent and very valuable." Then there is a recently re-

leased Justice Department memorandum, apparently written just before the Rosenberg arrest, saying, "Gold didn't implicate Greenglass." Later he did, of course.

Roy Cohn denies that Gold was a fantasist: "Do you think Gold who is a dreamer is going to dream himself into 30 years in the can? Gold's testimony has been fantastically corroborated. Fuchs' confession led the FBI to Gold."

Yet that is not what a senior FBI official, agent T. Scott Miller Jr., who was in charge of the Gold case, testified at Gold's own trial a few months before the Rosenbergs'. He stated that "the identification of Harry Gold's picture was not made until after Gold signed a confession."

Did Fuchs identify Gold as his courier?

Several years after the trial, one of the Rosenberg defense lawyers, Marshall Perlin, interviewed Fuchs in prison, in the presence of a British Member of Parliament. According to Perlin, Fuchs said that the American FBI agents urged him over and over again to identify Gold, who had already confessed. Finally, Fuchs said that if Gold wanted to identify himself as the courier, let him. But Fuchs (according to Perlin) never identified him.

Then there is the matter of Gold's identification of Rosenberg, a bit of evidence crucial to the prosecution's case. At the trial, Gold reported that his password was "I come from Julius." But some nine months earlier, he had said that it was a "Bob" or a "Benny" or a "John" who had sent him. In a Public Broadcasting System documentary, a former FBI agent, Richard Brennan, described how "Benny" became "Julius": "He used the expression 'Benny sent me,' which was the best that he could recall at the time. Subsequently, when the trial of Greenglass led to Rosenberg, we asked him '. . . could it have been Julie sent me, or Julius sent me?' And immediately he brightened up with a great light. 'Yes, that is it. It wasn't Benny, it was Julius sent me.'" Former agent Brennan went on to deny that they had led an eager-to-please Gold to where they wanted him: "We didn't plant that idea in Gold's mind. Actually, you couldn't plant an idea in his mind. It was given to him as a suggestion."

To help substantiate the links between Gold and the Greenglasses and Rosenbergs, the prosecution introduced a photograph of a registration card at the Hilton Hotel in Albuquerque on June 3, 1945. The original was on its way, said the chief prosecutor. Given the fact that the original never arrived, the photo is the only documentary proof that Gold actually went to Albuquerque on June 3. The prosecutor also introduced a photocopy of a bank ledger showing that Ruth Greenglass had deposited $400 out of the $500 her husband had allegedly received from Gold the previous day. In his summation prosecutor Saypol declared: "The veracity of David and Ruth Greenglass and of Harry Gold is established by documentary evidence and cannot be contradicted."

The only documentary evidence was the hotel card and the bank ledger. Both have been contradicted.

Examining the photocopies of Gold's registration card at the Hilton Hotel on June 3, the Schneirs found the hotel time stamp on the back had recorded June 4. "Baloney!" Roy Cohn said when I asked him about the stamp. "You mean to tell me that, in all the hotels in America, if the clerk doesn't switch a stamp—the nitpicking they come up with in this case is incredible!"

"The electric chair was used as psychological pressure. It was a matter of talk or die"

The Schneirs went further. Their curiosity aroused, they examined the card in detail. A handwriting expert declared that the handwriting on the card was not that of the clerk who had supposedly initialed the card. The card lacks the standard FBI notification that normally indicates what agent on what date found the evidence. Moreover, it turned out that FBI agents had spent several days in the attic of the hotel, supposedly going through records, when the room registration cards were kept by date and could have been located by merely cross-checking the registry.

The original card, incidentally, never did turn up. Despite the fact that appeals were in progress, it was, according to the Justice Department, returned to the Hilton Hotel, which destroyed it. On the basis of this disquieting evidence, the Schneirs reach the conclusion that the FBI did in fact forge the card in order to place Harry Gold in Albuquerque on June 3. The irregularities of the card, as well as recent revelations about Hoover's FBI, force us to give this charge serious consideration.

(The whole question of evidence and documents has become an intriguing issue in the case. Historian Allen Weinstein of Smith College, who applied for files on both the Rosenberg and Hiss episodes under the Freedom of Information Act, reports that several major FBI dossiers on the Rosenbergs are missing: "I requested a batch of specific FBI reports by name, name of agent and date. The answer I got was that some of the files were either taken out by some agent or lost." So far he has received not a page of Rosenberg material out of an estimated 75,000. This despite the facts that he went so far as to initiate a suit in 1972, that FBI director Clarence Kelley personally assured him in 1973 that the material would be forthcoming, and that the FBI has previously made available its files on these matters to "friendly" writers. Moreover, the FBI has indicated that, if Weinstein ever does get the files, he will be charged tens of thousands of dollars for processing. His case against the FBI under Freedom of Information comes up shortly in Federal District Court. The Meeropols will also be going into court in the middle of May to seek release of documents under Freedom of Information.)

The other bit of evidence linking the Rosenbergs to a plot, the bank ledger, is even less solid. The prosecution made much of the fact, borne out by the ledger, that Ruth Greenglass had deposited $400 in an account on June 4. The implication was that this was an enormous sum for people like the Greenglasses to be handling. But, after checking with other banks in the city, pro-Rosenberg investigators have discovered that the Greenglasses had deposited *several thousand dollars* during that year in other accounts from monies apparently unrelated to their official salaries. Such evidence bolsters the theory that Greenglass was deeply involved in a theft ring at Los Alamos, was entrapped by government authorities, and either voluntarily or under pressure implicated the Rosenbergs. It would not be the first time, or the last, that a government agency would have pledged leniency in return for cooperation.

The defense called only two witnesses—Julius and Ethel Rosenberg. The Rosenbergs did not much help their case with their testimony. Julius, for instance, found things to praise about the Soviet Union. Ethel refused to answer questions of communist affiliations, on the ground of self-incrimination. But both steadfastly denied they had had anything to do with any espionage plot.

On March 29 the jury of 11 men and 1 woman filed back into the courtroom. The foreman read the verdict: Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, Morton So-

bell—all "guilty as charged."

Judge Kaufman waited seven days before passing sentence. "I consider your crime worse than murder," he said. "By your betrayal you undoubtedly have altered the course of history to the disadvantage of our country."

A moment later, the punishment: "It is ordered upon some day within the week beginning with Monday, May 21, you shall be executed according to the law."

Kaufman supposedly went to temple to pray and get guidance from the Lord on the sentence. It is less clear whether or not he also sought guidance from the Justice Department. What is certain, however, is that the ultimate sentence was meant to frighten the Rosenbergs into finally "talking." The government, having gotten its conviction, was disturbed that it still didn't have an admission of guilt. "The electric chair was used as psychological pressure," says a psychiatrist who communicated with Ethel. "It was a matter of talk or die; if you'd only 'name names' their lives could be spared and she could save her husband's life."

The lawyers began appealing as soon as the trial was over. Higher courts declared that they found no judicial errors in the transcripts. Campaigns and committees sprang into existence both in the United States and abroad to fight for the Rosenbergs. The U.S. government incarcerated Sobell in the maximum security prison at Alcatraz, while the Rosenbergs were kept isolated in Sing Sing. The couple's only communication with each other was by letter, save for one short meeting each week.

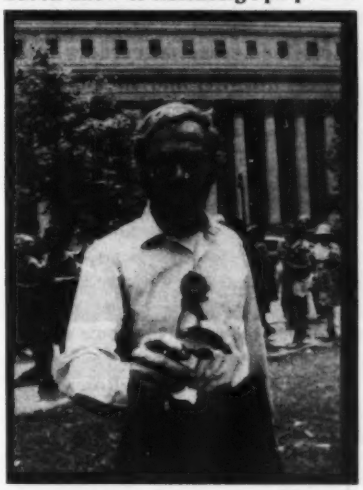
The appeals went on through 1952 and into 1953—unsuccessfully. But the appeals judges were concerned with the fairness and legality of the trial, and not with the credibility of the witnesses. New research, however, shows that at least some of the judges believed that key judicial errors had been made by the defendents' attorneys. For instance, one judge, in a private memorandum, described an inflammatory press conference in the midst of the trial by prosecutor Irving Saypol as "misconduct." The judge added that, if the defense attorneys had made a motion for a mistrial "because of Saypol's statement to the press,"

The survivor

Morton Sobell was the caboose of the "atomic bomb conspiracy," dragged along by invisible couplings, half out of sight even during the trial, forgotten for many years, and, today, a survivor. Last fall he published a book, *On Doing Time*, a powerful memoir that may come to be regarded as a Kafkaesque classic of prison literature. But it was ill-reviewed and mostly ignored. He had been released from prison in 1969, after 18 years and five months of imprisonment, some of it in solitary confinement at Alcatraz. Today, he lives in New York City, where he works as a medical engineer. He always figured he would get out some day, and so he took a correspondence course in transistors while at Alcatraz and then a course in X-ray when he was moved to another prison. "Even back then," he said, "I knew I'd be obsolete when I got out." The summer before last, his wife Helen went with a group of teachers on a tour to the People's Republic of China, but now, in the 1970s, since Nixon did it, no one cares, it does not matter, it will never be used as evidence in a trial.

Sobell continues to devote considerable effort to trying to understand and upset the frail case with which the government convicted him. Of the trial itself, he said: "It was obviously a political trial. The question of the guilt or innocence of the people tried had nothing to do with the objectives of the trial. The need for a political trial was very great because they needed to find a scapegoat for the fact that the Soviet Union had the atomic bomb."

In retrospect it is very difficult to understand how Sobell ever came to be tried with the Rosenbergs, even in terms of the government's own case. We now know that some of the appellate judges wondered too. "Is the evidence sufficient?" noted one judge, in a private memorandum. "Sending atomic bomb information is a much greater aid to Russia and more damaging to the United States than sending information such as Sobell knew of through his work for the Navy. There is no evidence Sobell knew of Rosenberg's purpose to



get atom bomb secrets. Conceivably, he would have balked at joining a conspiracy having this purpose. Could the jury find that he shared such a broad objective?" Another appellate judge was more explicit: "I think there is something very unfair in dragging a man like Sobell into an atomic-spy case. There is little, if anything, to show that he helped in, or knew about, the atomic-energy activities of the Rosenbergs and Greenglasses. The star witnesses never mentioned him. Elitcher alone told of Sobell's asking him to procure information from 'young scientists' and his stealing a 'fire-ordinance pamphlet.' The bill of particulars told him merely that, on five different dates, he had 'conversed' with Julius Rosenberg. I find it tough that he should be regarded as part of the same conspiracy as the others." But the judges could never bring themselves to act on their doubts.

The Sobells themselves have had more than enough years to review the whole case. I asked them, one evening in their apartment on New York City's West Side, if they thought the case had in some way symbolized the era when the Cold War was at its height.

"It really was a microcosm," replied Helen Sobell. "You really had all the main political issues, you had all the fears and tensions, and you really had the beginning of fight back in terms of the positions of the defendants."

"The defendants did not fight back," said her husband.

"They did fight back, Morty—because they maintained their innocence," she insisted.

"And I'm saying, dear, that was not enough. It was not enough, it was not enough. There was a possibility of doing a little bit more. It was not foreclosed."

Helen Sobell shrugged, helpless against her husband's insistence, helpless against all the what-ifs, all the questions unanswered across the years.

Morton Sobell took note of his wife's discomfort and stopped pressing the point. It was an old family argument. "We always differ on that," he said. ●

—Daniel Yergin

then Kaufman would have erred had he denied that motion. But no such motion was made." In another instance, one of the appellate judges, defending the fairness of his opinion, pointedly declared, "Indeed, at least two of the questions helpful to the defendants, which our opinion put up to the Supreme Court, were not suggested by their lawyers."

On May 25, 1953, the Supreme Court refused to review the case, and execution was set for June 18, the Rosenbergs' fourteenth wedding anniversary.

On June 16 Bloch shepherded the sons to the death house at Sing Sing for one last visit with their parents. The Rosenbergs themselves sent a petition to the newly elected President Eisenhower, arguing that the case against them was "a pyramid of lies" and seeking clemency.

Two new lawyers entered the case and convinced Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas to grant a stay of execution on grounds that the Rosenbergs had been sentenced to death under the wrong law—the 1917 espionage law, by which they were convicted and sentenced, had been superseded by the Atomic Energy Act. Normally, the stay would have remained in effect at least until the full court had reconvened from its summer recess in October. But the Justice Department was furious. Attorney General Herbert Brownell immediately asked that the full court reconvene at once to vacate the stay so that the case might "be brought to a final determination as expeditiously as possible."

The court did gather on June 18. But it came to no decision that day.

On the morning of June 19, during a Cabinet meeting, Eisenhower said, "I must say I'm impressed by all the honest doubt about this expressed in the letters I've been seeing."

"Who's going to decide these points—pressure groups or the Supreme Court?" retorted Attorney General Brownell.

Eisenhower retreated. "My only concern is in the area of statecraft, the effect of the action," he said.

The court gave its decision at noon, Friday, June 19. By a majority of six to three, it declared that there was no substantial question to resolve, and it vacated the stay of execution. Later on that same day, June 19, Kaufman informed the Rosenberg attorneys that he had moved up the time of execution so that it would not take place after the start of the Friday night Jewish Sabbath. And that "humanitarian" act was the end.

At 8:06, at Sing Sing, Julius Rosenberg was dead. Ten minutes later, his wife, Ethel, was also officially dead—several surges of 2,000 volts had been necessary to kill her.

Three days after the execution, Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter released his dissenting opinion on the court's last action in the case. He had considered the question as to under which law they were sentenced one of "substance" and could not understand why the court could not have allowed more time and followed procedures by which cases are "customarily decided here." He added: "To be writing an opinion in a case affecting two lives after the curtain has been rung down upon them has the appearance of pathetic futility. But history also has its claims."

And now it is a question of history: What did happen? On the basis of the evidence that has come to light, it is almost certain that the Rosenbergs did not steal the secret of the atomic bomb. But did they do something? Were they part of a conspiracy?

Frankfurter: "To be writing an opinion . . . after the curtain has been rung down has the appearance of pathetic futility. But history also has its claims"

Roy Cohn argues heatedly for the simple theory. The Rosenbergs, he says, were "pedestrian unimpressive communist spies, so typical of so many I had seen, among the duller you come across. There was nothing very illuminating or redeeming about them. The Rosenbergs' guilt is more transparent twenty years later than it was at the time."

Yet, the so-called evidence of a conspiracy is ambiguous, confusing and frail, and depends entirely on the testimony of a few very unstable and very frightened people. On execution morning, June 19, 1953, Attorney General Brownell, seeking to snuff out Eisenhower's doubts along with the Rosenbergs' lives, told the President: "There is evidence that wasn't usable in court showing the Rosenbergs were the head and center of an espionage ring here in *direct* contact with the Russians—the *prime* espionage ring in the country." That has never been proven. We have waited 20 years for such evidence; none has appeared. Indeed, virtually everything we have learned has pointed in the opposite direction.

The two sons, like many others, argue strongly that their parents were convicted to satisfy the needs of national security. Says Robert: "The Rosenberg-Sobell case was an attempt by the government to demonstrate to the American people that extraordinary measures were needed to counter a supposed internal threat to our way of life. Very few Americans have been investigated as thoroughly as my parents, and those investigations tend to show that they were not guilty. The government developed a McCarthyite anti-communist atmosphere of fear and hysteria. Using national security as a justification, the government wrote itself a blank check to carry on surveillance, create secret police forces, put on conspiracy trials and wage secret wars."

I asked Michael if he had ever thought that his parents might indeed have been guilty of—as it is often put—"something."

"Have I *ever* thought it might be?" he replied. "Yes, of course. I remember going to the death house and asking them if they were guilty. But I've never thought there was any possibility since I was 12, when I read John Wexley's book, *The Judgment of Ethel and Julius Rosenberg.*"

Then why his parents?

"I think to a certain extent it was chance."

Was there a conspiracy on the part of law enforcement officials? It is a question that, for the moment, cannot be answered with certainty. There has been no specific evidence to date to prove a complex government conspiracy, which would have had to involve a large number of people and taken some sophistication. What is clear is that suspicions about the government's handling of the case continue to increase.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation still takes great pride, at least officially, in having cracked what was, according to a large sign in the waiting room of its Washington, D.C., headquarters, "The Crime of the Century: the Case of the Atom Bomb Spies." The tourists pass a giant mural of a mushroom cloud, adorned with a hammer and sickle, and then the tour guide points out the photographs of Ethel and Julius. "They were the masterminds," he says. But, on one recent day, as the group was about to move on, one of the tourists asked, "Aren't there some questions about the case today?"

"It is a questionable thing," the guide murmured, quickly passing along to the next exhibit. ●

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An epitaph drear

By David Halberstam

These are the final days not just of a bad war but of an entire era in American life. They end, not so much in battlefield defeat but in a fall from grace. The end, fittingly or unfittingly enough, is without light or tunnel or whimper or bang, but with a mock humanitarian baby lift, undertaken so that we might even now feel better about our souls, see ourselves as we always wanted to be seen. For 25 years we have been a nation so rich and so powerful and so successful that we have been afforded the luxury of living in our own dreams and myths. Others were found lacking in strength of economy, in internal freedom, in muscularity of currency and length of national reach; as we found them lacking in these, we found them lacking in godliness as well. We became, finally, victims of our own success, a nation so excessive that we entered Vietnam, and so spoiled that we never knew how to leave it. Perhaps nothing in our recent history so reflected the difference between what we were and what we wanted to be as the war in Vietnam, and it was not surprising that it became as much a struggle of public relations as of military muscle. Saying was as important as doing. When the public relations failed, when the nation caught on, it became a war of self-deception. A war that Orwell foresaw with a Ministry of Truth in charge of Lying, a war whose architects, when everything else failed, could look at defeat and call it victory. This, right up to the last few weeks, when it all unraveled with astonishing speed, the speed outstripping even the briefing officers, the Pentagon mumbling about the failure of the Congress to give adequate aid when billions of dollars of equipment are left behind in unfought battles, and the American ambassador sending back maniacal cables calling for vast long range economic aid with the NVA at the gates of Saigon.

I have thought for some nine or ten years that this particular end was inevitable, though, like most people who have been there, I am surprised by the totality of the collapse. Some seven years ago I wrote that the only unanswered question left was how much damage we were going to do to the other side and to ourselves before accepting the final verdict. For that reason there may be, at least by American terms, something merciful in the finality of a collapse so awesome and complete as to leave the terminal events beyond debate. No one can claim that more aid might have turned it around, that the line could have been held. (Only Evans and Novak, heirs to the Alsopian mantle, were ready to make a stand. In mid-April they even came up with a new strong man—a little tiger, surely—passing on as his credentials that he was one of two Vietnamese officers to fight with the French at Dien Bien Phu. *With the French at Dien Bien Phu.* Have they learned nothing? This is like recommending a leader to the Americans at the time of Independence because he had fought valiantly with the British at Valley Forge.) Yet the quickness and totality of the collapse may spare us the kind of internal savagery that followed the loss of China; it is so clearly over, and it is so clearly a failure. Indeed, the American people have treated the events of the last few weeks with equanimity and fatalism, a kind of weary acceptance. Any politician hoping to exploit the failure in Vietnam as McCarthy and others exploited the fall of China would be well reminded that from the start of the Vietnam war the American people have shown more willingness to accept the truth and more common sense than their government.

Nothing in our recent history so reflected the difference between what we were and what we wanted to be as the war in Vietnam

There has always been a difference between the way the American people and Washington regarded the war. The war has always been much more a Washington war; Washington is a company town and this was the company war. The American people voted in 1964 for a

What we left behind: the son of a Vietnamese woman and a black G.I. (left) in a Saigon orphanage.

PHOTOGRAPH BY BARBARA GLUCK TREASTER

president who was not going to send American boys to do what Asian boys should do for themselves. They accepted the war with some misgivings in 1965, began to turn on it in 1967, and probably with Tet, in any real sense, wrote it off; I am sure they doubted that ARVN could do what the U.S. Army could not, and I am sure they always had their doubts about Peace with Honor. More, few normal Americans involved their careers and their egos in Vietnam; most, unlike the leadership, could readily let it go. Only a very few Americans were directly and emotionally involved in the cause itself. In effect, the leadership, fearing the lack of enthusiasm of most of the middle class, designed a war to be fought by technology and poor kids, one that would call for little or no sacrifice on the part of most Americans. When the war failed, most people were able to let go of it without great emotional loss.

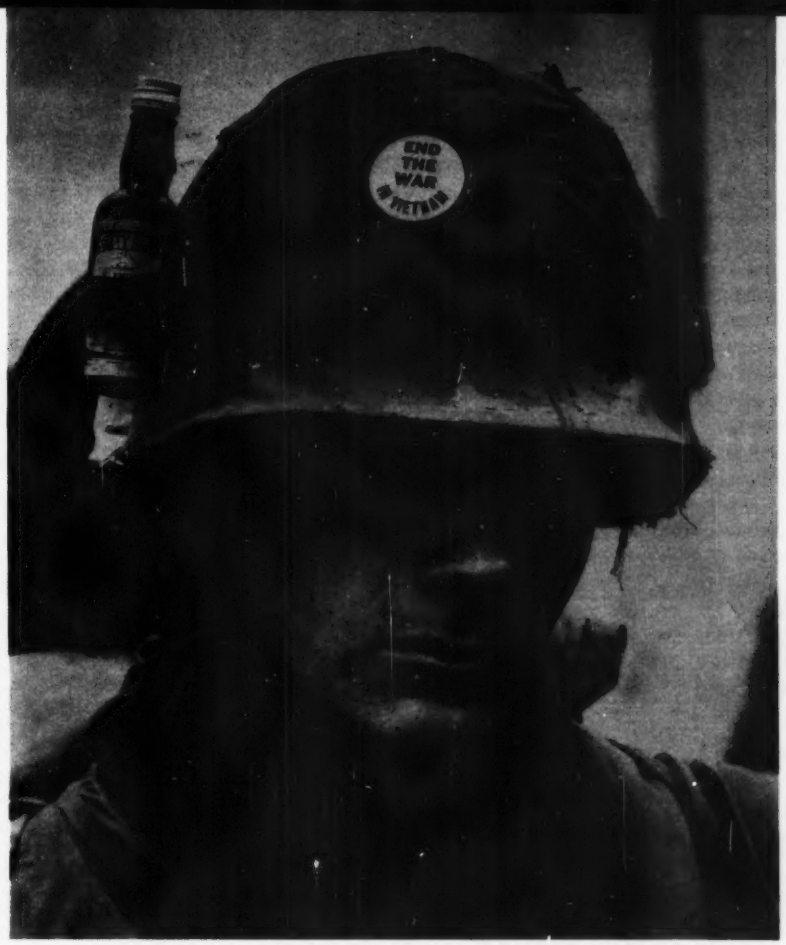
There is a reason for this: The war was always more an extension of the needs and fears of the Washington leadership than it was of the American people. If it was not a war that the leadership actually wanted, it was a war that it pretended it wanted and needed. For the crucial impulse for most of those decision-makers in the mid-'60s was the still haunting fear of the loss of China, which was by then very much a Washington impulse. If the McCarthy era and the fall of China did not weigh so heavily on the rest of the nations, it was still, in Washington, the great secret fear; it had profoundly affected two key organs of decision-making, the Asian bureau of the State Department and the liberal wing of the Democratic Party, where many good and innocent comrades had fallen. Thus the equation was always imbalanced and built on lies, the leadership doing something it felt it had to do in order to survive but also feeling that it had to keep its real rationales secret—it could not admit that it was sending American boys to Vietnam to prevent domestic scapegoating. So its real reasons were always secret, and it was selling one line and yet believing another. The dominoes were really their own jobs, not foreign countries. There is a special lesson in all this, the importance of candor and trust in a democratic society, the importance of a sense of faith on the part of a government that, if it is pursuing the right policies and explaining its goals properly, that somehow the American people will in fact respond. The Vietnam war began with the American government fearing and not trusting the American people, and it ended with the American people not trusting—and often fearing—the American government. It was a lesson never perceived by the leadership, men who did not know the importance of credibility and did not value their own words.

The loss of credibility, the loss of reputation by individual and by government, has been one of the stark and bitter facts of this war. Some 12 years ago I stood at the Tan Son Nhut airport with Neil Sheehan and watched more of an endless series of high Americans come to Saigon to give the great-victory/light-at-the-end-of-the-tunnel tap dance, and Sheehan nudged me and said, "Ah, another foolish Westerner come to lose his reputation to Ho Chi Minh." A generation of the architects of war lost their reputations, and now Kissinger, the latest example of that elite breed, has been severely damaged by recent events, Nobel Prize and all. He is paying these days for his dangerous instinct to personalize diplomacy—Xuan Thuy and *Women's Wear Daily*, too. What is personal going up is personal coming down, and he is paying for his lack of trust in the American people. I have never been one of Kissinger's great admirers, yet because he is a mythomaniac it is always hard to scrutinize his record, to cut through the layers of manipulation, and there is a certain pathos to being tainted by Vietnam. It is not his war, and yet he is part of it. He seems, as much as the early architects, a symbol of what was wrong in that era; intelligence was never his problem, but perhaps character and integrity were. He is the most cerebral figure we have had at State in years, and there is little doubt of his tactical ability; if anything, he is too smart by half and too tactical by twice. His failure seems to me to be more one of contempt for the democratic process; he is someone who wants trust but gives none, a man contemptuous of the Congress, contemptuous of the press, contemptuous of the public. Over five years his word has come to mean less and less, and he has played the role of so many different Kissingers to so many different people that I doubt he knows which Kissinger he is. A Kissinger in Nixon's image.

I mention this not to scapegoat him on the war, which is not his fault, but because he is symbolic of a leadership which talked one way in private and another way in public right through to the end and never understood that long, long ago the American people had become—involuntarily perhaps—knowledgeable and informed about Vietnam. That it didn't work. What is symbolic about the leadership of that generation is its lack of connection to the American processes and lack of respect for those processes. They were an elite, and they were an extension of the successful indices in a society that was not always so successful, that had its dark side as well, but where foreign policy and domestic failure were always carefully separated. This allowed the national security managers to operate under the enviable illusion that American democracy was everything we always said it was, an illusion not shared by high officials dealing with our cities. No wonder we were so immodest and untempered a nation. McNamara was the head of a company that glutted us with motor cars; he was not a man who came to us based on his experience with any form of public transportation.

Bundy was the Dean of Harvard, not of Tuskeegee or Fisk. Kissinger is of that group, a specialized elitist. I do not fault him for Peace with Honor—it was the best deal we could get. I fault him and Nixon for not getting it five years earlier, for the Cambodian bombing and the Cambodian incursion, and I fault him for the mendacity of it all, for calling defeat victory, for his belief that the rest of the world would not know what had happened in Vietnam and that we ourselves were not worthy and strong enough to bear the truth. He got us the best deal he could, later than he should have; his mistake was in trying to tell us it was a better deal than it was.

The truth about Peace with Honor was that it was always a form of Caucasian face-saving, of concealed defeat. The American military intervention in Vietnam was stalemated, and because it was stalemated we had lost; we had to go home and the other side could stay. They, after all, were fighting total war and we were fighting a war of luxury. When it was over and we were pulling back, the NVA had 175,000 regulars inside the South (roughly 170,000 more than were there when we started the bombing in 1965). We had been fighting the birth rate of their society and they controlled the rate of the war. So we had to leave. What the Nixon Administration did at the time—with great skill—was switch issues, take the peripheral issue of the POWs, and (with the consent of the media, particularly television) turn it into the central issue. Getting the prisoners became a victory, and the attention of the eye was diverted from the issue of what had happened on the ground and how many NVA had been left in the country to the return of the prisoners. The return of the POWs, emotional, human, was televised at great length, stirring all humanitarian and patriotic feelings; what



PHOTOGRAPH BY DONALD MCCULLIN/MAGNUM

A G.I. in May 1968. Some 25,000 Americans were yet to die.

was missing was any kind of comparable tough, long, documentary summary on what had really happened on the ground. It was not so much what the networks did as what they did not do—a great victory for Agnewism.

The most disquieting part of all that high level manipulation is the implicit belief of those who have led us and been given our trust that we as a nation could bear anything but the truth, that we are so arrogant and insecure a nation that we cannot accept a real world with a real America with normal limits of our will. Which I think means that what has happened in Vietnam is not just a form of distant defeat, not just the end of an era, but part of a continuing fall from grace, and finally a judgment. We were, 15 years ago, a nation too emboldened by our own myths and our own arrogance, and we are being judged for that. The war, I think, cost America its innocence if nothing else, the belief that America was different, that we could do what other nations could not do, that we could define history rather than let history define us. If in the early days of the war someone mentioned to the American architects that the French had fought in Vietnam and had failed, then there was a slight arching of an eyebrow, a gentle reminder that France was a defeated nation, not a can-do society, that its people had drunk too much wine and lost too many wars, and that America was different. America did not know the meaning of defeat. Nor of war. It had retained, in a century of total war, a special innocence. Two great oceans had spared America the reality of the horror of previous wars; if anything, the World Wars had brought us to the zenith of our industrial capacity; an event which had leveled most of the rest of the industrial world had made us stronger, richer, more confident in ourselves. But I think that Vietnam is different. It was television's first war, what Michael Arlen called the living room war, and if it did not bring home the physical damage, then there was at least some psychic damage. Television caught in a terrible way the disproportion of it, the most powerful nation in the world using its technological might on a peasant society. There are moments about this war which are simply different, shattering to the American myth. It began to change the day in 1965 when Morley Safer turned his camera on Marines burning down a village and brutalizing women and children. The Zippo day. It was a total reversal of the American myth: The American legend of the West has the Americans in white hats protecting women and children; the Indians are the savages who brutalize the innocents. It was a moment that touched our souls and it would often be repeated. In the past it had been our soldiers who had given out chewing gum and the other country's soldiers who had committed massacres. And now television was stripping us of our self-image. It ended part of the American myth and much of American innocence; no wonder it changed not just how Americans looked at Vietnam but how they looked at themselves.

Which leaves the question of what the war—and the defeat—will do to America, a nation uniquely unaccustomed to defeat. It was, after all, the shock of the fall of China, the belief that *we* had lost China, that started the witchhunts that brought us to Vietnam. The belief that those who had most accurately predicted the events of China, the rise of Mao and the fall of Chiang, were therefore guilty of their own prophecies, and were traitors. If China begat Vietnam, what will Vietnam beget?

Perhaps with a little luck, simply a more mature, more tempered nation, a country with a little more self-knowledge. For in many ways this is an era different from the late '40s and early '50s. McCarthyism came right at the end of World War II, when America was a new and unsure superpower, when China and Russia—so recently allies—were now adversaries, and when the terror of the atomic weapon hung over everyone's heads. But 25 years later there is the beginning of détente, the dawning of the notion that the communist world is not a monolith. The atomic weapon is as terrifying as ever, but it is an *old* terror. And there is this crucial difference: America never sent troops to China, as it did to Vietnam. It will be hard to argue that we did not give enough aid to the Vietnamese, not after $150 billion and 500,000 men and more than 55,000 combat deaths. By 1968 this country was exhausted and sick of the war. If Ronald Reagan, for example, wants to make an issue of the war he must first answer himself why he did not make it an issue in 1968 when he could have challenged the Johnson leadership. So perhaps this will be a different era—one almost wants to whisper it, that we can become a wiser, more modest nation, a people shorn of some of our mythology, involuntarily tempered by battlefield defeat. If that happens, it will be one of the few positive things to come out of Vietnam. ●

A nation in hock

By Chris Welles

Debt.

At one time—a long time ago—the word had vaguely unpleasant connotations. People preferred not to go into debt if they could avoid it. And if they did, they didn't like it and did everything possible to get out of it. But over the past four decades, our conception of debt has changed. The unpleasant connotations fell away. We began to call it by a new name, one promoted by those in the money-lending business. The new name was *credit*. Credit, we discovered, made it possible to buy a lot more than we could if we used just cash. The bad image attached to borrowing money, we came to believe, was an irrelevant vestige of less prosperous and secure times when being in debt was risky and imprudent. Credit, we felt, really wasn't risky, at least within reason. (Our view of the term *within reason* became expansive.) And so in recent years we have blissfully added layer upon layer of credit, marveling in the material possessions it makes possible and unconcerned if we'll ever be able to pay it all off.

Now debt is killing us. With the U.S. having reeled from the worst inflation in a century into the worst recession since the Great Depression, and the outlook, once we get out of the recession, being another round of crushing inflation, increasing numbers of economists are blaming, more than anything else, too much debt. It is the "boundless expansion of credit commitments," says Albert Wojnilower, economist for First Boston Corp., the prominent investment banking firm, that has made inflation "so exceptionally rapid and intractable." And according to Federal Reserve Board Chairman Arthur Burns, "There can be little doubt that inflation is the principal cause of the decline in economic activity in which we now find ourselves."

Not too long ago, most economists assured us that borrowing money on a large scale was essential to economic growth. They said it gave business healthy "leverage": business could do more with less of its own money. They witheringly dismissed the warnings of a small band of right-wing radicals that the nation was becoming dangerously overextended and that it could fall into an economic apocalypse, with thousands of businesses collapsing from inability to pay their bills and dragging down their creditors with them.

The right wing hasn't been right about too much lately. But in the case of debt, their alarums have become all too plausible. *Business Week*, which is not given to overstatement, commented in a broad analysis of debt several months ago that "never before has the Debt Economy seemed more vulnerable, with a depressing number of borrowers and lenders in precarious shape."

The credit binge that began after World War II has snowballed since the '60s and left America an economic house of cards

Like the number of miles to the nearest star, the statistics on debt are so large as to defy comprehension:

—Total public and private debt in the U.S. is $2.8 trillion ($2,800,000,000,000). That is close to $13,000 for each American and twice the per capita income. It is also twice the nation's gross national product. For every $1 in the nation's money supply, there is $8 in debt. The total debt breaks down into $1.3 trillion in corporate debt, $650 billion in public debt and $900 billion in individual debt. For corporations the debt is 15 times after-tax profits. For individuals, it is 93 percent of disposable income. One dollar out of every four that individuals receive in total income after taxes goes for debt repayment.

—The federal budget deficit for fiscal 1975 (which ends June 30) is estimated at $45 billion. With federal spending in 1976 expected to approach $400 billion, next year's deficit could reach $100 billion. This would be larger than the previous 15 deficits *combined*. To finance these deficits, the Treasury will have to borrow over $100 billion during the next 18 months.

"We are in effect living off our inheritance and mortgaging our future at one and the same time," Treasury Secretary William Simon said recently. "Neither man nor government can continue to live beyond its means for very long—and if we continue this way, we will lose not only our prosperity but our freedom as well."

How did we get into such a mess?

The present debt crisis, to a degree, must be seen in the context of a broad economic cycle of credit expansions followed by corrective recessions or depressions that has characterized the world economy for centuries. Like withdrawal for a narcotics addict, the corrections bring about painful but necessary credit liquidation that reduces debt to manageable levels. The reason for the severity of the current crisis is that the natural corrective process was artificially restrained by unprecedented expansionary activities by the federal government. Alexander P. Paris, a financial adviser and author of *The Coming Credit Collapse*, is among the once discredited but now increasingly heeded conservative alarmists. We are where we are now, he says, due to "over thirty years of accumulated financial abuse."

The abuse began about the time

Chris Welles, a free lance specializing in business and finance, is the author of The Last Days of the Club, *a book about Wall Street which will be published in the fall.*

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when debt ceased being a bad word—the years immediately after World War II. Deprived of material possessions for so long by the Depression and the war, and their savings accounts swollen, consumers went on an unprecedented buying spree. No longer forced to support the war effort, corporations eagerly expanded to supply the necessary goods. Caught up in the euphoria, the federal government, particularly after the Full Employment Act of 1946, took on the responsibility for maintaining full employment and economic prosperity.

As the economy began to boom, available cash resources were soon used up. But no one seemed to mind. Consumers began borrowing to finance their purchases. Corporations began taking on more and more debt to meet the demand. Banks, finance companies and other private lenders began promoting easy credit. Though the federal government had incurred a large deficit to finance the war, federal spending and the federal debt grew rapidly to meet the expanding conception of governmental social responsibility. That the government itself had over $250 billion in debt and didn't seem concerned helped convince everyone else that debt—within reason, of course—was a good thing. And to make sure that everyone had enough cash to borrow and spend, the Federal Reserve, which can increase or decrease money supply through regulation of bank lending and purchases of government securities, flooded the country with new money.

Whatever uneasiness about this borrowing may have existed during the '40s and '50s dissipated during the '60s, when federal economic policy came under the control of the so-called new economists. At one time, during the reign of more traditional economists, economics was known as the "dismal science," not the least of the reasons being that it was dismally uncertain and unreliable. On any given question, from the most profound to the most ostensibly self-evident, there existed among economists the most fundamental disagreement. But during the '60s, with the nation in the midst of the biggest economic boom on record, the confusion seemed to vanish. A happy breed of new economists—disciples of John Maynard Keynes but armed with sophisticated computer systems—seemed not only to have discovered how the economy worked but how to "fine tune" it in order to achieve the long elusive goal of simultaneous full employment, low inflation and economic expansion. The troughs of the old business cycle, it seemed, had been eliminated. Perpetual prosperity seemed tantalizingly close.

The apparent achievement of the new economists, which coincided with the apparent achievements of many social scientists who in the flush days of the Great Society believed themselves to have found ways to remedy most social ills, removed the only reason to be worried about the rising mountain of debt that had made the boom possible. With the chance of a bad slump now, like malaria, conquered by modern science, the government, corporations and individuals went on a vigorous borrowing binge.

Corporate debt tripled. Mortgage debt doubled. When the overburdened stock and bond markets were unable to supply money-hungry corporations, they turned to the banks. At one time, banks simply collected deposits from savers and loaned the money out to borrowers. But as loan demand soared beyond available deposits, the banks went into the short-term money markets. By selling such sophisticated inventions as "certificates of deposits," they actually "bought" money to lend out to customers. Banks loans began growing twice as fast as deposits. Once the biggest lenders, banks became the biggest borrowers. But even this was not enough. Entirely new markets of debt instruments, such as commercial paper and Eurodollar bonds and notes, sprang up and grew to hundreds of billions of dollars.

All of this profligate living beyond our means normally soon would have run its course, as the economy sank under the weight of growing interest payments. But, instead, the economy was propelled further upward by the most rapid accumulation of federal debt since World War II. The political process, many have noted, is inherently inflationary: It is always easier for politicians to cut taxes rather than raise them, increase spending rather than cut spending, expand credit rather than contract it. Yet none of his predecessors would have dared what Lyndon Johnson did in the mid-'60s. Certain that his economic magicians could handle anything, Johnson decided that the old economic choice between guns and butter was obsolete and that both the escalating Vietnam war and the burgeoning Great Society programs could be financed without any new taxes. It was the ensuing burst of deficit spending which prevented a badly needed correction—a recession—and engendered the fierce inflation that we have been living with ever since.

The efforts of government economists to deal with this inflation revealed just how unjustified the new economists' confidence had been and how pernicious and dangerous the mountain of debt had become. The classic, pre-new economics means to induce an inflation-curing correction was to restrain the growth of credit and the supply of money. But when the Federal Reserve first attempted this in 1966, it discovered that the overextended economy had become too vulnerable to stand the cure. As corporations desperately sought funds in the shrinking money market, interest rates soared. The economy moved perilously close to a credit "crunch," at which time there would simply not be enough money to go around. The Fed had no other choice but to ease up. In 1969, when inflation became even more serious, the Fed tried again to apply the brakes. But again a crunch loomed. When the Penn Central ran out of money and filed for bankruptcy in June 1970 and a panic seemed imminent, the Fed was again forced hurriedly to pump new money into the system.

Last year, with inflation almost out of control, the Fed tried a third time. This time it acted gradually, hoping to reduce the inflation and temper the expansion without spurring a crunch or a recession. But so dependent on ever-ballooning credit had the economy become that even these mild measures have produced havoc. Bankruptcies are up 30 percent over the last year and, according to the Bankruptcy Division of the U.S. courts, "bankruptcy filings for 1975 will break every record in the book." The government has predicted over 230,000 bankruptcies this year—90 percent of them by individuals—but the total could go much higher. Just as he was told that piling on debt was perfectly respectable, the consumer is now being advised by newspaper articles and such authorities as former Pennsylvania insurance commissioner Herbert Denenberg that filing for bankruptcy is both legal and proper. It may be, said Denenberg, "the best inflation-fighting tip for well over a million Americans in 1975."

Total U.S. public and private debt is $2,800,000,000,000. That is about $13,000 for each American

Although most consumers will avoid bankruptcy, the extent of their economic hardship remains considerable. Delinquencies on installment credit are close to an all-time high, as are late payments on mortgages. Master Charge, whose 34 million credit-card holders had $4.8 billion in outstanding balances at the end of last year, up 27 percent from 1973, reported record losses from delinquencies of $259 million. Rising numbers of people are seeking help from professional credit-counseling agencies, which have expanded ten-fold over the past decade. Bill-collecting agencies last year were given a record $12 billion in debts to collect. (They complain, though, that their business is hurting because the recovery rate, on which their fee is based, is dropping sharply.)

In the worst shape are married consumers between the ages of 25 and 40 with incomes of $10,000 to $15,000, who are responsible for two-thirds of individual debt and who have been badly affected by the high unemployment rate. Unlike the poor, they believed themselves sufficiently affluent to buy on credit the houses, appliances, cars and other appurtenances of the good life that they'd always wanted. But unlike the rich, they really didn't have enough income to support the debt load for these goods without the steady succession of raises they'd grown used to during the boom. Their entire style of living was inextricably tied to continuing prosperity.

Corporations have found themselves in much the same position. It is an open secret that a number of overextended major corporations would have had to file for bankruptcy had their banking creditors not decided that the legal entanglements of the bankruptcy courts would be worse than the risk of exercising forbearance and letting the corporations—under tight supervision by the creditors—try to work out their problems. A typical example was W.T. Grant & Co., the large variety-store chain, which built so many unprofitable stores in the expectation of endless increases of consumer spending that it lost $175 million last year. Rather than force the concern to close down, its 26 creditor banks decided to defer $540 million worth of loans that were coming due while the company retrenches to a more prudent size.

Many state and local governments are equally burdened. The most publicized example is New York City, whose debt load of $15 billion is $2 billion more than the city's budget for next year. Like the federal government, New York allowed city services to expand far beyond its income from taxes. Its cash position has become so tight that it has to borrow hundreds of millions of dollars a month just to meet its payroll. Yet investors have become so reluctant to load their portfolios with city-issued paper that to get funds the city has had to pay exorbitant interest rates. Some of its issues have

proven unsalable at any price. Recently, in desperation, the city had to borrow $400 million from New York State. But budget officials say New York will have to come up with another $1.5 billion by the end of June just to meet daily operating expenses. Though the officials claim such an action would be political suicide and point out that the state constitution requires the city to raise its real estate taxes to whatever level necessary to avoid defaulting on its borrowings, some financial experts have suggested New York may be forced to file for bankruptcy.

Though a somewhat dramatic case, New York City is just one of numerous municipalities in financial distress. Many have sharply curtailed public services to reduce swollen budgets. The Long Island community of Long Branch was forced to borrow money from a local bank to meet its payroll. Other communities have had difficulty keeping their schools open. A recent United Press International survey found that "many states are close to financial disaster."

Conditions are no better overseas, where countries have been guilty of the same overexpansion as the U.S. and face the added burden of massive oil payments to members of the Middle East oil cartel. Italy, in particular, is close to collapse, and such essential services as mail delivery, electric power and sewage disposal are on the verge of breakdown. The only thing saving the country is the fear by its creditors that forcing the country to go under by calling up existing loans could have a domino effect on other straitened nations such as Great Britain that eventually could engulf Western Europe.

The prospects for a solution to the traumas that too much debt has heaped upon us are bleak. Due to the economy's precariousness, the Federal Reserve and government economic planners have been under intense political pressure to relax their deflationary tactics. With unemployment at record levels and an election just a year away, Congress has indulged in a new splurge of deficit spending. Treasury borrowing to finance this new deficit, as well as past debts, will be so substantial that many experts, including Treasury Secretary Simon, warn that private borrowers such as corporations will be "crowded out" of the money markets, for there is only so much lendable money to go around. When in March the Treasury borrowed $1.25 billion the same day that General Motors was trying to sell $600 million in notes, the bond market was thrown into near chaos. According to Simon, "The financing demands of the Federal Government and the private sector combined will seriously threaten to exceed the capacity of our financial system." To avoid another crunch as well as an aborting of the hoped-for economic recovery, the Federal Reserve will likely be forced to inject into the economy an infusion of new money. And this, in turn, may well lay the groundwork for a virulent new round of inflation and debt expansion when the recession ends.

Except for some radical change in the forces that have brought us to our current unfortunate dilemma, we may well face a continuing series of ever more vicious inflations intermixed with ever more severe recessions, with the chance of a full-scale panic becoming ever more likely.

And as if this were not bad enough, there may be other developments which, though less apparent, are just as disturbing. In such a traumatic economic environment, companies that are small, in intensely competitive industries, or engaged in risky new ventures with new technologies, will be very vulnerable. Many may be forced out of business. The chief survivors will be the biggest and strongest companies, particularly those with monopolistic and oligopolistic holds over their markets, which are better able to insulate themselves from adversity. Weep not for the IBMs. The result could be the biggest increase in economic concentration since the era of the great trusts during the late 19th century.

If the cycle repeats, the result could be the biggest increase in economic concentration since the era of the great trusts

Abetting the concentration will be those who played a major role in making the nation's mountain of debt possible: the banks, particularly the big New York, Chicago and West Coast banks. The recession has hurt many smaller banks. Even some fairly large banks, such as Franklin National, have been forced out of business. But because of their immense size, financial resources and prestige, which protect them from the recession and permit them to obtain lendable money unavailable to smaller banks, the largest banks, despite large write-offs for bad loans, are enjoying record profits. Earnings of the 25 largest banks climbed 28 percent during the first quarter of 1975. According to *Business Week*, "The U.S. banking system has been heading very clearly toward a point where a mere handful of giants will dominate the nation's financial business." Particularly during recessionary periods, these banking giants prefer to deal only with the largest and healthiest corporations. Bank trust departments, not coincidentally, hold hundreds of billions of dollars' worth of stock in the same corporations.

There are, it should be said, large numbers of economists, certainly a majority, who dismiss the potentialities mentioned in this article. The argument can be made that debt is really a simple matter of bookkeeping. For every borrower, after all, there is a creditor. And as long as the economy is basically strong, the amount of money owed by and to the various participants is irrelevant.This reasoning, however, ignores the increasing interest and repayment burdens which debt is placing on the participants and their growing vulnerability to even minor slumps. If A is forced to default on his debts to B, then B may be sufficiently affected to be unable to pay C, and so on. Though it may be inapplicable to Southeast Asia, the domino theory could prove only too real in the American economy.

The argument can also be made that, while serious, the debt problem can be solved by conventional economic means. And, indeed, it is quite possible that the present recession may successfully ease inflation, reduce debt to more manageable levels and prepare the way for healthy economic growth. Perhaps the new economists will be proved right after all, but nobody is sure, and the record of past attempts to deal with the problem offers little comfort. And the reasoning of those who dismiss the alarmists often seem little more than that contained in the contention of Albert H. Cox Jr., chief economist for Lionel D. Edie & Co., that "widely predicted catastrophies seldom materialize."

If Cox is wrong, we are left with two scenarios. One is a continuing, ever more volatile alternation between inflation and recession and a steady burgeoning in the mountain of debt, which could entrench a powerful oligarchy of the largest banks and the largest corporations. The other is an apocalyptic financial disaster which would bring down that oligarchy and just about everything else and which would probably lead to a massive government takeover of American business.

It is difficult to decide which option would be worse. ●

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Chief Chiloquin's last stand

Klamath Falls, Oregon—They wear faces of today—cheek muscles heavy with flab, teeth traded in on too many candy bars, hair black and skin still coppery but, because of interracial marriage, lighter than a century ago. They speak English with lots of slang, in a kind of rural Oregon drawl. Old people can still mumble words of an ancient tongue; but within a generation, they will be gone. They have left the forest for clapboard boxes that cluster in tiny run-down towns in the hills above Klamath Falls. They are the last of the Klamath Indians, and the last 135,000 acres of their land have just been confiscated by the government for a token compensation. But, since this money will be split among only 600 Klamaths, most will receive small fortunes—$100,000 each.

Wednesday, December 4, 1974, was payday. The Klamaths trekked down in pickup trucks and cowboy hats to wait noisily in line at the U.S. National Bank of Oregon. The total payoff was $49 million—almost enough to buy up the entire city of Klamath Falls (pop. 17,000). Local merchants were keyed for a glut of conspicuous consumption. Newspaper ads reminded the Indians that Coupe DeVilles and snowmobiles were ready for delivery. Mobile home dealers, jewelers, haberdashers all swelled their inventories.

One by one, the Klamaths picked up their checks. At the end of the day, only one was untouched—a voucher for Edison Chiloquin in the sum of $103,594. Most everyone assumed that Chiloquin, the tribe's last hereditary chief, would come for it later.

But weeks passed. The check sits in a bank drawer, and Chiloquin stays away. Heavy winter snows envelop the little town 30 miles north that bears his family name, Chiloquin (pop. 830). Edison and Dorris Chiloquin keep two wood-burning stoves stocked with logs, the only heat for a mottled white-frame house that blends into a hillside of ice, lava rock and austere tree limbs. In summer the Chiloquins eat and sleep on the ground under an 18-foot-tall tepee hand-sewn by Dorris. Now they are indoors, surrounded by a strange jumble of two worlds: animal skins, jars of wild rice, a 19th-century grinding stone, twines of buffalo grass, arrows in a quiver, a warrior's shield—but there is also a clutch of popular magazines, a 12-inch portable TV set and a piano.

Edison Chiloquin does not want an automobile or a snowmobile or even new clothes. He is comfortable in his work jeans and sheepskin vest. He stretches back, boots crossed, hands in lap, dark face folded into deep furrows, white hairs escaping where his black braids are bound by thin leather strips, and he phrases his explanation in a voice raspy and oddly remote: "To me the land is sacred. The money can't replace it. They can keep the money—I want a piece of our land back."

When the U.S. Cavalry rode onto this land in 1864, it was green with a treasure load of ponderosa pine—on a carpet of pine needles were friendly people who chose not to fight the white invaders. The Klamaths believed that their gods watched over them through the flocks of ravens that nested high in the ponderosa. Edison Chiloquin's grandfather signed a treaty with the U.S. government ceding away 13 million acres in exchange for a reservation of 1.9 million acres.

By 1974 the Klamaths had been tricked and swindled of all but 135,000 acres of the reservation. Most of it was taken by lumber companies and white men who coveted their timber.

As a small boy Edison Chiloquin played in Mbushaksh-Shawalsh, the "arrowhead," a triangular patch of forest that had been the site of his grandfather's village. Artifact thieves and nature's encroachment had erased any traces of the original homes. But landmarks—such as the sacred toad-shaped rock and the rock-provided-with-a-face—were still visible to those sensitive to volcanic artistry.

Mbushaksh-Shawalsh was a short walk from the faded white house where his father had moved after selling his ranch, during the Depression, and Edison spent many hours there alone. He didn't enjoy hunting—"It was too boring." Instead, he tried to capture the wilderness with a pencil and paper, a hobby that, he says, later reclaimed him from the bottle.

It was while painting trash barrels

to pay off his drinking fines that the dejected young man reawakened to his boyhood. "I found I had a lot of pictures in me that wanted to come out." By the time he and Dorris married, he was staying out of jail and off booze. In Dorris he found a like-minded aesthetic; she writes poetry and stitches deerskin into tepees, and she is absorbed in her Indian heritage.

Dorris has spent hours scribbling down the memories of older Klamaths for a book she is writing on the tribe's history. Edison's sketches will illustrate the book. "Washington tried to legislate the Indian blood right out of us." Dorris' voice rings with a resolute ire. "But we will always be Indians."

In their house at the edge of Mbushaksh-Shawalsh, Edison and Dorris Chiloquin are busy inventing a plan to reclaim the village site. Instead of taking his $103,594 check, Edison is going to ask the government for title to the "arrowhead," an 800-acre fraction of the Klamath tribe's original 13 million acres and a modest compromise to the dispute over the final 135,000 acres. If the government agrees, the Chiloquins will resurrect their ancestral village, building lodges from saplings, bark and earth, gathering most of their food, hoping for other Klamaths to join them.

Edison, 51, well past middle age for a modern Indian, is asked an irreverent question: Isn't he too old to endure winter's ferocity in a mud-insulated lair? "No," he replies firmly, "the land makes me feel young again." The 800 acres, Dorris adds, ultimately will be for the young people. "This is our last chance, and *their* last chance. The kids around here are saying, 'We're not Indians, we're not whites—who are we?' Without this land, they will be lost."

Some Klamaths are willing to try another route. One group of ten used their checks to buy up 50 percent of the second biggest shopping center in the county, a first step toward Indian capitalism. Local merchants who envisioned a rip off bonanza were disappointed; luxury autos remained driverless on overstocked car lots. A Fuller Brush salesman, according to local gossip, knocked on Indian doors for a week but went away with just one sale. Two hucksters, peddling silver from a station wagon with Idaho license plates, were last seen beating their way out of town with consumer fraud investigators hot on their trail.

Three months after the $49 million payoff, most Klamaths still have their money, yet sudden wealth has not really bettered their standing in south-central Oregon. "The Indians never did nothing for the money," grumps a motel clerk. "They don't deserve it." In Klamath Falls the Klamaths are still outside the workings of white society. The county employs one Indian schoolteacher and one Indian road worker in a payroll of 783. The city work force lists no Indians at all. Interracial violence remains a chronic tableau in the columns of the Klamath Falls *News Herald*. The dropout rate for Klamath schoolchildren, based on a recent study, is ten times higher than for whites. And an alarming state report released in January reveals that 80 percent of all Indians over 14 years old abuse alcohol or other drugs.

As long as he doesn't touch his check, Edison Chiloquin feels, he will not revoke his claim to a part of the Klamath land. But he was recently informed that Congress must approve a separate transaction to give him the 800 acres. So he and Dorris have begun pilgrimages to the offices of Oregon congressmen, including Senator Mark Hatfield and Representative Al Ullman, who, it appears, may sponsor the necessary legislation.

Even so, a final irony is already brewing. A government archaeologist wants Mbushaksh-Shawalsh preserved for science under federal antiquities laws. What has prevented that from happening so far is the archaeologist's inability to locate the exact site of Chief Chiloquin's village.

Edison Chiloquin has known all his life where to find the toad-shaped rock and the rock-provided-with-a-face. And although he won't divulge this secret to the government archaeologist, he is willing to give other strangers a tour of the "arrowhead," pointing out the best spots to pick berries, lamenting that his grandfather's grave has been looted by museum collectors, but happily eyeing a future plan to replant juniper and cedar over the scars left by loggers.

"Everywhere we walk we're walking in the steps of my ancestors," he says. Across a frostbitten knoll a hoarse cawing can be heard. To Edison Chiloquin it is a felicitous sound, a message from his gods. This winter, the ravens, long vanished from these woods, have returned.

—By David Weir and Howard Kohn

Dorris and Edison: "The land is sacred, money can't replace it."

PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID WEIR

High-rolling in Alaska

Oil is the new Messiah and boomers from cities and suburbs, bayous and boondocks are racing the geese north this spring to find a piece of the multi-billion-dollar action

By Steve Kline

The plane slips through the murky twilight that marks winter in the Arctic. Far below, the darkened landscape is broken by patches of light, a slender garland carving a lonely trail and pushing deep into the north.

This is the Alaska Pipeline, more awesome, somehow, when seen from the air, the camps signaling an audacious arrival of man. It is Bonanza and El Dorado rolled into one, a dozen Sutter's Mills, a hundred, a project so vast its numbers boggle the imagination, being built with blood and billions, polarizing the state into extremes where some foresee a tax-free utopia with streets paved with oil, while others shake their heads and predict environmental Armageddon.

It started years ago, decades ago, really, when the first United States Geological Survey crews trudged north, with pack horses, and they roamed the tundra, and the horses would die and the men walked home, carrying on their backs the saddles of the dead horses.

Today, thousands of workers across the North Slope form the vanguard for the greatest stampede of all, born nearly two miles beneath the snow-swept Arctic floor. Oil is the new Messiah, and Alaska's business community preaches a black gold gospel as it prepares for the sacred laying on of pipe, a sedimentary sacrament.

The rush is on, and this year in Alaska the surest signs of spring are the boomers racing the geese north, looking for jobs and homes and a piece of the

PHOTOGRAPH BY DOUG WILSON BLACK STAR

PHOTOGRAPH BY DOUG WILSON BLACK STAR

multi-billion-dollar action. Virtually every major facet of life in the forty-ninth state is undergoing traumatic change, and residents who would not glance twice at the sight of moose grazing near downtown now stare with apprehension at the influx of "foreign" license plates.

A pretty blackjack dealer leaves the casino to seek her fortune as a $100 prostitute in Anchorage.

A young man quits his minimum-wage job as hotel clerk, then three weeks later flaunts a $2,400 paycheck for the envy of former co-workers.

And a computer specialist now services heavy equipment in Prudhoe Bay. "It's a challenge," he says. "It's different." It also doubles his $25,000 aerospace salary and offers four months a year off.

These are the boomers, from the cities and the suburbs, the bayous and the boondocks, lugging duffel bags crammed with hope and converging upon America's last vast wilderness in a modern sequel to the gold rush. It is a migration; the good ol' boys are back, and the southern flavor of the "oil patch" has stamped the state indelibly with a drawl.

There are small, wiry men and pot-bellied men and men so huge they seem carved from granite. There is every kind of man you ever saw and perhaps a few you wish you hadn't. There are drillers from Texas and derrickmen from Oklahoma, Nebraska welders and New Jersey mechanics, and hot on their heels come the gamblers and girls out of Vegas, the schoolteacher from Encino, the nurse from St. Paul, the middle-aged chef from Pittsburgh and the Arizona liberal arts graduate, all here for jobs, yes, but not only jobs, here to be . . . part of it, just part of it, is all—sleeping on plywood beds, working the restaurants and gin mills and stockrooms, the college girl from Tampa clomping from the unplumbed cabin with a small propane torch in hand, thawing the car battery, passing the hot flame over the wheel drums in 64 below Fairbanks. . . . Adventure. Where the action is, the only action, the biggest action ever, anywhere, and even without one of those high-rolling pipeline jobs it is still possible to watch and be part of it. For booming is a spectator sport.

The businessman at the bar was boasting among friends. He talked about a football team in California. "Those stiffs will never come within six points," he said, and his friends nodded agreement.

"I'd bet . . . $3,000 they won't," the businessman added.

Toward the end of the bar a man sat alone, drinking Crown Royal and listening. He finished his drink and got up from the stool slowly, fishing out his wallet. Then he approached the businessman, whose back was to him. The man was a roughneck from a North Slope drilling rig. He had never finished the seventh grade, and was from somewhere in West Texas. Now he counted from a roll of $100 bills. New ones. He was at 18 and still counting when the businessman stopped pretending he could not see the roughneck in the mirror.

The roughneck counted to 30 and placed the stack of bills on the bar. "You're covered," he said.

The businessman was quiet. "I'll . . . I'll have to write a check," he said finally.

The roughneck smiled. "I figured you would." He left the stakes with the bartender and strolled away.

Fairbanks. It was early in the afternoon and the contractor sat up in bed, lighting a cigarette. He stroked his hand down the back of the girl sleeping next to him.

"How'd you like a job?" he said. "I'm looking for a secretary.

She rolled over and smiled a sleepy smile. "Here in Fairbanks?"

"No. You'd be based here but you'd travel with me. I have to visit all the pipeline camps and check on our equipment."

"How much would it pay?"

The contractor paused, thinking. "Two hundred a week," he said. "Two hundred a week salary, and I get 20 percent of the action."

"Action? What do you mean by action?" said the girl, who knew very well what he meant.

"Action," the contractor said again. "Twenty percent, or $200 a day, whichever comes first." The girl was silent, so the man went on. "Those workers are lonely," he explained. "They work nine weeks on and one week off, and they've got money to burn. In Valdez the girls are getting $50 for a five-minute head job in the men's room."

The girl was very good at blushing, so she blushed. She took her time because she had been in Alaska four months trying to find a deal like this and she did not want to ruin it.

"Okay," she said, after a while, and smiled shyly. "When do I start?"

The contractor looked bored as he reached for the wallet on the nightstand and took out two $100 bills.

"You just did," he said, handing her the money. "Here's your contract."

Herman the German stepped up to the bar and ordered a drink. It was a good neighborhood bar, with small black velvet paintings of the northern lights, with women in wool pants and sweatshirts, men wearing work shirts, mostly, and caps with fuzzy ear flaps, a bar for trappers and Teamsters and businessmen and boomers, belting down whiskey and Buds, a typical, no-nonsense Fairbanks bar.

Herman the German was on R and R from the pipeline, and alone. It was Thanksgiving. Not long ago there had been a lady, but she was Outside now, in Texas. He thought about the lady and

PHOTOGRAPH BY DOUG WILSON BLACK STAR

A former reporter for the L.A. Times, Kline is currently working on a book about the roughnecks of the North Slope.

hoped she would come back. To encourage her, he sent a present. A $700 fur parka. She was not supposed to open the present until Christmas, and it was only Thanksgiving and Herman the German was alone and drinking as he thought about what he might do next.

"Maybe I'll go down to Anchorage," he said. It was a hard thing to say because he did not like Anchorage, but he lived in Fairbanks and Fairbanks had not been very good to him, either, lately.

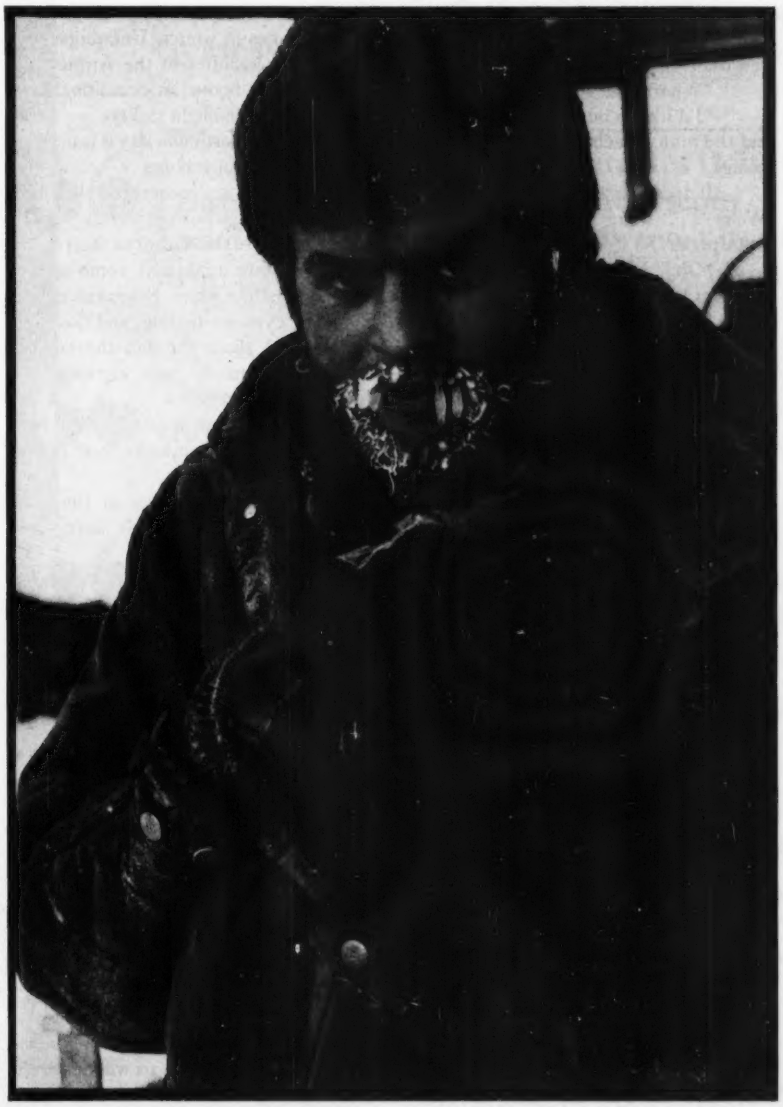
"My first day back I got thrown in jail," he said, annoyed. "All I did was carry a can of beer down the street on the way to my car, and I got arrested." He shook his head and wondered if he should return to work on the pipeline or buy a truck of his own.

"I paid the mortgage on my duplex, paid the second mortgage, paid off my car and all my bills. I never dreamed I'd make this much money in my life," he said. Then he thought again about Anchorage. "I haven't been there in a while. Maybe I should go, but the people down there are all crazy. They're nuts. The last time I was there I wrecked two cars, got shot at and some clown came at me with a knife."

It was Thanksgiving and Herman the German was alone. He could have gone to visit friends for dinner, but he did not feel much like doing that. Instead, he met two strangers at the bar. They all went to a motel lounge where they sat around a fire and had Irish coffees and beer for Thanksgiving dinner. Herman the German and his two new friends all remembered it as a good Thanksgiving.

Most of the workers hit town and cashed their paychecks into $100 bills. Crisp ones. They especially liked the crisp ones, and you could tell if a man was just in from the Slope because he would get irritable and say bad things if he had to settle for used bills. Used bills are worth the same but not really. There is a great deal of difference in carrying around used $100 bills or new $100 bills. The bills feel different and the man carrying them feels different, and any man who has worked hard enough to carry a roll of $100 bills knows this is true.

But this man was not like the others. He walked up to the teller's window and endorsed $6,000 worth of paychecks, asking for small bills. Then he went out and gambled, but he did not play cards or craps. He played Monopoly. With real money. Sometimes, the man knew, small bills can make a big impression too. It all depends on how they are used.



PHOTOGRAPH BY SARAH WEBB BARRELL

Jerry had a career that stretched through oil fields in 14 states, which he liked to talk about. He also had a record, which he never talked about.

Now he sat in his jockey shorts on the couch, a fresh beer at his side. It was 2:00 in the afternoon and he had just gotten up. On the edge of the coffee table a cigarette was balanced on top of the empty beer can he was using for an ashtray. A loaded .44 caliber automatic lay toward the far end of the table alongside four stacks of money. The gun was not hot and he was very proud of it. Jerry counted from a roll in his hand and began a fifth stack. The fifth stack was just $800 high when he ran out of money to count. Jerry took a long pull from the beer and looked down at the money, puzzled. He counted it again and then counted it a third time, but each time it came to $4,800.

"I'm short," Jerry said. "I can't remember what I did with about $1,400."

He leaned back on the couch and thought. "I gave $400 to Louise, Audrey needed $250 so there's that, and I loaned Luke $2,000. . . ." He shook his head. "Nope. I'm still short."

"Did you go over to the joint?"

"Yeah. I figured that in. Dropped $1,200 shooting dice, but I won all but $200 back playing cards."

His eyes were very red and his hair was uncombed. He was coming off his first night in town following a hitch on the Slope, and Jerry did not look well.

"You don't look well, Jerry."

"I don't feel well," Jerry said. "At first I thought I was going to die, but now it's worse. I'm afraid I'll live."

In obvious pain and with great effort, Jerry rose from the couch and weaved a trail to the bathroom. He flushed the toilet and it overflowed. Jerry stared at the bowl, the water brimming onto the floor, and viewed it, with the

missing $1,400, as an omen of a bad day. He wondered idly if the toilets worked better in Hawaii. He could go through the game of trying to fix the toilet, but he had tried that before and it never worked. He could open and shut closets looking for a plunger, but he knew he did not own a plunger. Maybe this would be the day he would buy a plunger, he thought, then stopped himself. No, that would be giving in. Instead, he did what he always did. He stared at the toilet, trying to will the water to subside. The staring did not work. But then, it never had. What the hell, he thought, there was no toilet paper anyway.

It took an hour, a full hour, but Jerry managed to wash without doing himself or the apartment further harm. He did, however, notice an ugly bruise on his leg and fresh scratches on his arm and wondered darkly if they might be related to the missing $1,400. Then he scooped up the money from the table, finished the beer—by now warm—left the .44 caliber automatic where it was, and bounded downstairs toward the pickup with the cracked windshield and right door that would not open.

There was a long line in the bank, but the girl standing ahead of him had pretty legs so it was a pleasant wait. He made the deposit, then suddenly stopped as he was crossing the parking lot toward the truck. A grin grew across his face.

"I remember," he said. "Now I remember," and he laughed softly.

"What? What's to remember?"

"The $1,400. I just remembered what I did with it. I bought some dope."

"Some dope. You dropped $1,400 on *some* dope?"

Jerry was offended, now the teacher, the professor:

"We'll be going back to the Slope soon, and we'll be rigging up and it will be January. It's going to be a long winter, a long, long winter." He laughed again, this time very loud.

They called it the Pipeline Express because there was no change of planes and it was a straight shot to Seattle, then out and southbound, toward Odessa and Big Springs and Bossier City and Tulsa.

On board there were about 20 men from the oil patch. Most sat toward the rear of the plane, as was customary, close to the girls and liquor. The other passengers were tourists and businessmen from places like Sioux City.

The plane was airborne, just peeling away from Anchorage, when the No Smoking/Fasten Seat Belt sign went out. The girls prepared the galley and unlocked the stores. They readied the rolling carts as a stewardess strutted down the aisle to take orders for drinks.

"Excuse me, Miss." A man toward the right rear section, on the aisle, stopped her and held her wrist lightly.

"I'll be right with you, sir," she said. "First I have to take the cocktail orders."

She started to turn away but the man still held her wrist.

"That's what I'm talking about." He was fumbling for his wallet. "I'd like to. . . ."

"I'll get to your section in a minute, please." The girl was becoming annoyed. The man had just spent five months on the Aleutian chain with a seismic crew for an oil company. Now he had a lot of money and was going home to Louisiana.

The stewardess talked to the man as she would to a child.

"We have to start from the front."

"That's just fine, Miss, but first—take this." He gave her two $100 bills. New ones, of course.

"What's that for?" she said.

"I'd like to buy the plane a drink," said the man, nonchalant. "And keep the change."

It took her a moment to recover. "We're . . . we're not permitted to accept tips, sir."

"Oh," he said, "that's too bad," and went back to reading a magazine.

Up front, before too much time had passed, the other passengers had heard the story. A few even turned around to see the man in the plaid shirt and jeans, but he was leaning back, reading, and few could spot the benefactor.

"What's he trying to prove?" a woman said to her salesman husband.

"Nothing," the husband said. "He's just one of those boomers. Trash. Nothing but bums who make a lot of money and think they're big deals."

"Well," said the woman, "I, for one, am not impressed. I think it's a stupid waste of money."

The man agreed, and they both settled back in the recliner seats and drank the drinks bought by the man who did not impress them. They did not talk for a long time after that.

Deadhorse is the commercial air base near Prudhoe, 250 miles north of the Arctic Circle, served by Wien Air Alaska—the "Weeny Birds" to Arctic veterans. Until this year the terminal was a small group of dilapidated trailers. During spring break-up, the melting snows on the roof would rain inside, and travelers were forced to negotiate an obstacle course of hundreds of string bean and coffee and fruit cocktail cans positioned carefully, it seemed, to miss catching the drips.

The first thing anyone arriving at Deadhorse saw then were posters on the wall, a collage of fleshed-out G-strings and sarongs and bikinis, hustling tours to Vegas, Hawaii and Acapulco. Any way you looked at it, it was a rough landing.

Now Deadhorse has a new terminal, bigger, more plush and sedate by Slope standards, opened recently with a party featuring hula dancers and free booze donated by several airlines. Company officials and public relations people and the press were there, and later a few dozen workers from surrounding camps dropped in, even one of the Slope's dope dealers looking for his connection. He was smiling. Dope was up to $50 a lid, he said. And business was good.

The party is over and the workers are the same, but there are many first-timers now, and it is always easy to spot the new ones in winter. Unfamiliar with the harsher realities of the Arctic, they wear cowboy boots, an occasional cowboy hat, jeans and light jackets.

On this particular day it is not very cold—warm, really, about 30 below—but by the time the newcomers fish their bags from the baggage box outside they are instantly aware of the danger of their casual dress. Ears are bright red, some already turning frostbite white. Noses run uncontrollably; eyes are tearing, and the slight bit of wind slices through the cowboy boots and stuns the toes, working back quickly to the heels.

"Jesus," says a young man from Oklahoma, "is it always like this? Is it always this cold?"

"Cold?" The driver of the company truck laughs. "This is warm, son. Hell, this is the banana belt."

The young man from Oklahoma laughs with the driver, but for the wrong reason. He thinks the driver is joking. By tomorrow morning the temperature will drop another 45 degrees and the young man from Oklahoma will see that he was not.

This is Deadhorse, a zoo, a scattered community of company camps with no vacancy, where the Weeny Birds touch down and men race to the terminal, a madhouse, with workers lost, confused, the shouting: "Brown and Root! Brown and Root! Anybody here for Brown and Root? BP? BP? PARKER? PARKer here! Hey KODIAK? Anyyouguys from Kodiak . . . Chrissakes where's Alaska General?!" And each night, now, a parade of electricians from Houston or roughnecks out of Wyoming seems to wander about the Slope seeking last-minute accommo-

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dations, and more than one $50,000-a-year executive has been thankful to spend the night on a recreation room couch.

Disgruntled workers are not uncommon. They complain about the lack of parts, or tools, or taxes which gobble more than 50 percent of their checks, and the graffiti on a latrine wall seems to echo the sentiment toward new federal spending programs:

$E=MC^2$ plus tax

Not long ago, not much longer than a year ago, and certainly not as long as two years, there were less than 100 workers throughout the North Slope oil patch. Soon there will be perhaps as many as 7,000. Delays are inevitable.

"I paid the mortgage on my duplex, paid off my car and all my bills. I never dreamed I'd make this much money in my life"

Wildcat drilling rigs are behind schedule; the word on the street is that already the pipeline lags five months behind its three-year target date, though Alyeska officially concedes only six weeks. It is a classic situation of snafu, and the oil companies compete with the pipeline they sponsor for everything from trucks to cargo planes in an effort to support one of the most active drilling programs in Arctic history.

The kitchen at one major camp has not had a food delivery for five days. The men have been fed powdered milk and are not pleased. In the old days, the days of five, seven, ten years ago, the men were lucky to get a box of apples once a month and endured drinking water laced with bits of muskeg, but today at Deadhorse and Prudhoe there is grumbling about the powdered milk. A chef jokes about serving the "last supper," and by the end of the week food must be borrowed from another camp. Freight is regularly bumped from scheduled airline service, or faulty handling may leave thousands of pounds of foodstuffs to freeze near the runway. One company desperate for a 194-pound sprocket stashed it in a pillow-lined duffel bag and shipped it as personal baggage.

Price is no object. The salaries are higher than ever, generally about $1,200 a week and more, but the mood is tense, far different than in years past, or even last summer, when there was not as much work and most of the hands had prior experience in the Arctic. Now there are newcomers, too many newcomers, and with them comes bitching, and surliness. And theft. Rings, wallets, watches disappear. Bunny boots, popular surplus footgear, fetch up to $100 a pair—up from $17 two years ago. Down-filled parkas and long underwear vanish, and the pilfering of equipment borders on the incredible.

Drilling contractors are especially subject to thievery. When a rig is finished drilling a hole, it is abandoned and left until the next job—sometimes years away. It would seem there is no safer place in the world than the wildcat Arctic to store equipment, but the contractors can count on having to replace $20,000 to $80,000 worth of gear before the next rig-up. Once a location is abandoned it becomes a popular rallying point for sled-trains of Cats (Caterpillar tractors) and Rolligons (vehicles designed to exert minimal pressure on the land), which cruise the tundra.

"We've lost tools, fittings, valves, torches, hoses, impact wrenches—once we even lost a $15,000 water tank," grumbles a company official, who currently scours the Slope for a missing 750-kilowatt diesel generator. Camps are stripped of everything from beds to chain saws, sinks and even toilets. Tools are regularly stolen by workers going home, and it is not unusual for a 30-pound slab of beef to find its way into an outgoing duffel bag. One pipeline worker tried to haul off 13 cases of sardines.

To compound the stealing, spring is the season of the barren ground grizzly, a creature common to the Slope. It is always a sobering experience to witness the damage one curious bear can do to a securely locked camp. As a rule, he ignores traditional entries and with his paws simply tears the metal siding away, then claws through wooden braces and walls.

This is the Slope, where men fatten themselves on three meals a day, then struggle through 10- and 12- and 14-hour shifts. It is a life of incongruities, dining well on steaks and chops while their women at home cannot find produce in the markets; where some camps are lucky to receive mail once a week, while at others Anchorage is but a local phone call away. It is home to the caribou and grizzly, wolf and arctic fox, and now technology has established a beachhead marked with the conquering flags of its derricks.

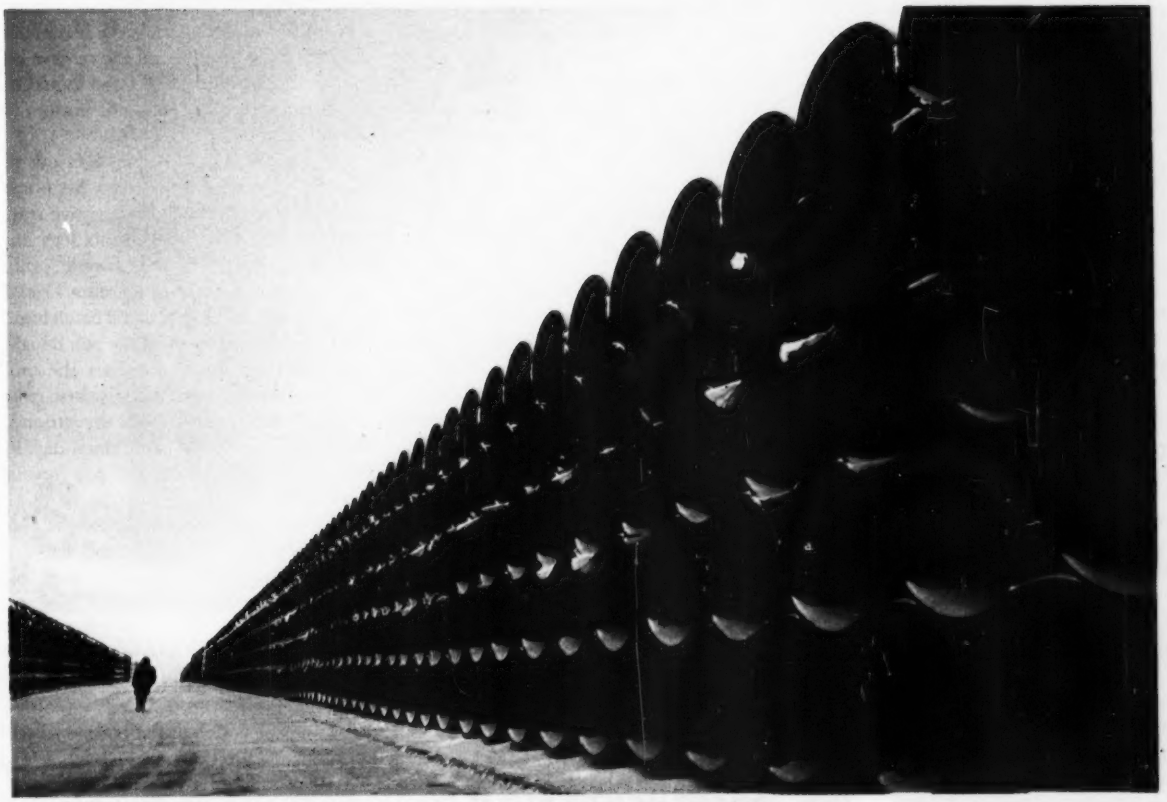
They will be there a long time.

Rig 97. It is 82 degrees below zero in Kemik, a location where Parker will drill for British Petroleum, in the foothills that lean into the spectacular Brooks Range. This is Kemik No. 2. The new camp is in place and crews are rigging up, hoping to spud, or begin drilling, within two weeks. But weather is a factor. If the weather is not merciful, rigging up can be a hell on earth that takes three months.

There are no roads to Kemik, no cargo strips. There is a runway for small planes, but it is not serviceable. The only available strip is at Fin Creek, 17 winding miles away, where the cargo planes and Otters land. The Otters are amazing planes; they can take off or land on a dollar bill and give a quarter change, but, like everything else—everything except the men, that is—Otters are vulnerable to cold. They do not fly when it is less than 40 below. They do not even crawl. This means that Kemik gets food and mail deliveries perhaps once a week.

Hoses freeze. Coffee set aside for a minute is suddenly solid. Engine oil turns to the consistency of peanut butter. Even the vodka freezes.

PHOTOGRAPH BY SARAH WEBB BARRELL



PHOTOGRAPH BY DOUG WILSON/BLACK STAR

PHOTOGRAPH BY SARAH WEBB BARRELL

It is not warm.

"My wife asked me how cold it really gets here," says Red Crawford, a driller with thick, bearded stubble and knife scars on his face. "I told her to go downstairs and stick her hand inside the food freezer. That's 20 below. Then I told her, I could crawl in there and get warm."

It is time to begin work and Red leads his crew outside. "Let's get after it," he says, and the men get up from the benches, putting on their mittens. He opens the door and, pausing for a moment, sucks the raw cold into his lungs.

"I do believe we had a frost last night." He pulls the face mask down to cover his nose and mouth. "Yessir, I do believe there's a frost on the punkin patch today."

Red. Originally from Magnolia, Ark., he "broke out" in the oil patch when he was 14 and earned 56 cents an hour, which was more than the crane operators. He was the son of a roughneck, and today remembers his father as a man who could still climb into the derrick at 73 years old and work the stands of pipe and drill collars.

Now Red is 45, a veteran of oil fields from Louisiana to Libya, a man with an easygoing sense of humor.

"I had to leave school in the first grade," he explains solemnly. "I was in love. I had a crush on my teacher and I knew it wouldn't work out, you know, because of the difference in our ages. She was just 20 and I was 35."

Red lives in Bossier City, La., but is still most proud of his Magnolia upbringing. He will tell you there are good ol' boys from Magnolia working on rigs all over the world, in Venezuela, the Middle East, drilling from platforms in the Gulf and the North Sea and Southeast Asia. More than a few, like Red, are here now on the Slope.

Rig 97, like most rigs in the Arctic, is based on a gravel pad at least five feet thick and designed to insulate the tundra. The pads, and accompanying gravel runway, represent an investment of $2 million before the rig ever reaches the location.

"It's not so bad if you say it fast," shrugs one executive.

Toward the center of the pad at Kemik the derrick is assembled on its side, with several girders and cross-braces hopelessly mangled in transport from its last location. The welder and an assistant prepare to cut and replace the bent slabs of steel. Before the metal can be welded in this temperature, it is necessary to enclose the area and beat it. If it is welded cold, the steel will remain brittle and collapse under stress. In the oil patch it is considered very bad luck to have a derrick fall down on you. Ask Melvin. He knows. He is 46, another Magnolia roughneck.

"You heard right, sure. I was on a derrick that collapsed once," he says. "It just gave way and collapsed, caved in right under me. You're damn right I was up there when it happened."

Melvin was about 90 to 100 feet above the drill floor at the time. His arm dangled by a thread of skin. Three ribs were broken. One punctured his lung and he was hemorrhaging.

"I saw my arm hanging there and couldn't move it. I stuffed it in my coveralls so it wouldn't get in the way and managed to climb down. By the time I got to the hospital I couldn't breathe because of the rib in my lung."

Yes, Melvin still works the rigs, but these days, understandably, he prefers to handle the derrick when it is like this—sideways, on the ground.

It takes an hour and a half to drape the frozen canvass and sheets of plywood over the section to be welded first. About 200 feet of extension cable is needed to power the space heaters. The diesel-powered welding machine is moved into position by the forklift, and an electric light is strung out to the enclosed area.

There are two space heaters. Without warning, one freezes and dies. The other space heater is turned to thaw the first, then it, too, dies. The electric light goes out. The welder tries to ignite the propane torch to thaw the heaters,

but the propane torch is frozen. He lights the cutting torch to thaw the propane, but the hose is brittle. It freezes in wide, looping coils and cracks; the gauges on the oxygen and acetylene bottles freeze, and the valves on the torch ice shut. It is time to surrender. The equipment is hauled back to the shop, across the pad, to thaw.

The heater now serving the shop was designed to heat an entire rig, and it is too hot for the small building. A rubber tire from one of the heaters melts. The plastic backing of its engine is like soft goo, and the heater is replaced. Cables that had been placed to thaw are now too soft, and must be set aside to cool. Each time the men enter the shop, or camp, traditionally known as "the house," they undergo a 150- to 175-degree temperature change in ten seconds. It takes both hands to remove a face mask, the front of which is coated with a thick slab of ice.

"I wish I was makin' $6 an hour," mutters a man who earns almost twice that.

"Why?"

"Then I could afford to leave this nasty sonuvabitch." He pauses, sipping his coffee. "I'll tell you, even what I'm makin' now won't keep me here that long."

Another man complains of diarrhea.

"Really? Has your back been a little sore, too?" asks a friend.

The man with diarrhea is guarded. "Yes, a little. Why?"

"And your shoulders, how about your shoulders? Are they sore, too?"

"A little. Yeah, a little. Why, what's it mean?"

The friend shakes his head, and starts to speak but stops.

"No, I better not say anything."

"What the hell are you talking about?" asks the man with diarrhea.

The friend seems to debate with himself whether or not he should explain. Finally he says, ominously: "It sounds like the fever."

"The fever? What fever, for Chrissake?"

"The fever. The North Slope fever. Ain't you ever heard of the North Slope fever?"

"No. Just what in hell is the North Slope fever?"

The men around the coffee pot were very quiet as the friend explained.

"Well, it starts, just like with you, right around your ass. It gets, you know, a little sore. Then it sorta works its way up your back, right up your spine. I've seen it happen to lots of guys. Then it kinda settles in your neck for a while, and pretty soon you start getting headaches, real bad headaches, and then it goes right straight to your eyes. That's the worst part. What it does to the eyes."

"What? What's it do to the eyes?" asks the man with diarrhea, openly concerned now.

Again the friend shakes his head.

"Why, when it gets to your eyes it just gives you a shitty outlook on everything."

The man with diarrhea is suddenly recovered and well enough to chase the friend halfway across the pad, and the coffee break is over.

The day plods on. Two forklifts have frozen and must be serviced and thawed. The equipment for the welding job is repositioned, then a truck runs over the electric cable, which shorts out and cracks in 37 places. The cutting torch hose cracks in three places. The gauges and torch head and heaters freeze again.

Hoses freeze. Coffee set aside a minute is suddenly solid. Engine oil turns to the consistency of peanut butter. Even the vodka freezes

On another section of the pad, the younger welder is having troubles of his own. He is trying to cut metal straps, six of them, which bind a skid-load of equipment. It is normally a 15-minute job, but by the end of the 12-hour shift he will have just finished cutting the last strap. Together the one day of welding activity will log three broken torches, three downed space heaters, a broken propane torch and three ruptured sets of welding hose. The total output for two welders involves the cutting of six narrow metal bands and the installation of two cross-braces for the derrick.

Over on the rig, Red's crew is also having trouble. The wind walls, massive, 3,000-pound steel panels, were designed to be hoisted by a crane. Here the job must be accomplished in jury-rig fashion, with just a truck and forklift. It is slow work, carefully winching the ton-and-a-half roof panels across those already set, taking up slack on the chains here, giving it there, trying to line up half-inch bolt holes as the steel crashes and banks and threatens to topple the supporting beams.

John, still another Magnolia hand, stands on the edge of the roof. It is about 20 feet to the ground, but the reserve pit for cuttings is where the ground should be and it is another 20 feet to the bottom of the pit.

Daniel, a deaf derrickman out of Florida, is behind John when his boots slip on the icy steel and his legs give way. He falls into John, kicking his legs out from under him. John falls, frantic, grabbing at air, and at the last instant Daniel manages to reach forward and catch him.

For a long moment the pair dangle near the edge, bracing against the momentum that threatens to carry them over the side. Men watch from the ground, powerless to help. At last Daniel digs in and squirms back, and the pair regain their footing.

It is time for the 3:00 o'clock coffee break, and Red teases John.

"Yessir, you should've seen ol' Johnny's eyes. They was big as saucers. Saucers!"

There is a good laugh, but Johnny is not in the mood to take part in it. "I guess they was," he concedes. Another quick cup of coffee and it is time to get after it again.

The day is a long one. The roof panels stubbornly refuse to line up in place, and one snaps a chain, nearly dropping into the pump room below. The brief hours of not-quite daylight are long over. It has been a hard day, a Tuesday, the end of the Parker week. After nearly three hours, just two more panels have been positioned and there is still one to go.

"What time is it?" Red asks, pulling his face mask under his chin and lighting a cigarette.

"Just about six. Three minutes till."

Red checks his own watch and looks at the last panel, then back again at his watch.

"Screw the sonufabitch. Let's go to the house."

He beckons to Johnny, who passes the word and joins him. It was a good day, after all, the end of another week, 88 more hours, a 12-hour, all-overtime day, worth about $200, and the moment on the roof has already faded into ancient history.

Slowly the men form in a ragtag march to the camp. A man on the night shift meets them going in.

"How was it, Driller?"

Red pulls the frozen face mask over his head, then breaks into a wide grin.

"Not too bad," he says. "We fooled 'em out of another one." ●

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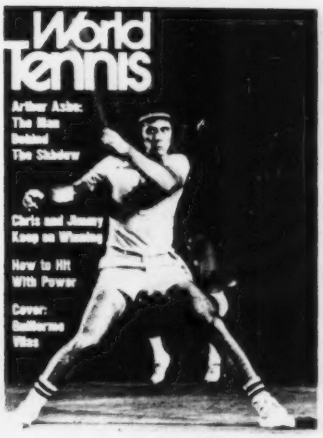
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PHOTOGRAPH BY STEVE COOPER

"You don't want to work here. After all, how many ways are there to say big tits?"

Shel Silverstein, allegedly speaking to a *Playboy* magazine job applicant

Keeper of the Playboyese

A former *Playboy* Party Jokes Editor recalls what it was like "to keep the female population in line with a brisk adjective or two"

By R. D. Rosen

I can only say in my defense that I had no intention that June of becoming the custodian of the page of gags that lies in the shadow of the Playmate of the Month. I had returned home to Chicago from college without a job, my oldest brother lived beneath a *Playboy* editor, and a combination of these two circumstances produced my employment on the plush tenth floor of the Playboy (née Palmolive) Building on North Michigan Avenue.

At the time, it was gratifying to be able to say to friends who inquired what I was doing for the summer that I was *Playboy*'s Party Jokes Editor. It sounded considerably more interesting than camp counseling or lawn mowing. But, alas, it is not exactly to one's credit to have once been a purveyor of Playboyese, that lascivious sub-language which has given linguistic form to so many unsavory male instincts. No, it doesn't really reflect well on one's integrity to admit that for a summer one spent the best hours of the day learning how to weight punch lines with the proper innuendo, develop refreshing, new ways to say "a piece of ass," keep the female population in line with a brisk adjective or two.

Before I could do so, I had to sufficiently demonstrate to a senior editor there that my sense of humor was compatible with *Playboy*'s and that I was willing to chain my creative talents for a while to *Playboy*'s rigorous ideology. At the conclusion of my interview on Friday afternoon, the editor handed me a large manila envelope bulging with Party Jokes mail ("Heard a good one lately?" reads the message at the bottom of each Party Jokes page. "Send it in on a postcard to Party Jokes Editor. . . $50 will be paid to the contributor whose card is selected . . . ."). He asked me to take the bundle home, select the ones I deemed suitable for *Playboy*, and rewrite and type up the winners according to my understanding of Playboyese. If I passed, the job would be mine for the next three months at the salary of $90 a week.

That weekend, I sat on a patio in a Chicago suburb and found, among the 300 jokes in the envelope, only 15 I could with any conscience return to my editor. I typed and retyped feverishly, casting a glance periodically at old Party Jokes pages in order to familiarize myself with the sanctioned epithets. After two days of toil, I carried a clean sheaf of finished jokes into his office, feeling all the satisfaction of one who has been shelling peas for the last 40 hours. The editor looked over my work as I fidgeted in a chair. Not once did a smile threaten his dour expression; but after a few tense moments, he looked up and said: "Fine. Can you start today?"

Was I ready to give up the muse for mammon, even for a summer? Was I prepared to temporarily renounce anapests for breasts, prosody for Playmates,

PHOTOGRAPH BY STEVE COOPER

the spirit for the flesh?

You bet I was.

That same afternoon I was installed in my own office, one whose material comforts made it ridiculously incongruous with my salary. I had a large window overlooking elegant Michigan Avenue, a vast marble-topped desk, editorial paraphernalia—many of which, like dictaphone and staple remover, I would have absolutely no use for, and others whose functions I never even discovered—and, to boot, a secretary who although not so generously endowed perhaps as the tenants of the centerfold still fostered the impression that *Playboy*'s personnel department had access to a special and highly favored race of *Homo sapiens*.

I was baptized immediately. My job the first week was to read every Party Joke that *Playboy* had published since its inception so that I would be able to spot repeats. This exercise helped prove that American humor is largely the province of the male psyche; and, as others, including Freud, amply pointed out, that dirty American jokes afford men a formal outlet for their sexual fantasies, leaving most women to their repressions and occasional, embarrassed confidences. My attention was then turned to a series of large-format, illustrated books called *Sex-to-Sexty #1, #2*, etc., which are available at any porn shop. I was to comb these for new material,which they rarely provided. What they did provide were hours of unrelieved tedium, soon colored by some resentment when I realized how much energy I was expending merely to ensure that *Playboy*'s millions of readers would not be treated to a stale joke. But then, as I was often reminded, the magazine's readers usually turned right to the joke page. To be *Playboy* Party Jokes Editor is, in many respects, to be nothing less than a cultural impresario, a great comic provider, the father of fodder for businessmen's lunches, stag parties and cocktail hours.

A couple of things became clear to me right away. In looking over already published *Playboy* Party Jokes, I noticed that women were rarely referred to merely as women. Unmodified female protagonists are in danger of being assumed to be unattractive or lumpy; hence, they are regularly rescued by a canon of adjectives from such unappetizing fates. I inherited this tradition. The *Playboy* Party Jokes page of September 1968, one which I confess to having selected and edited, will serve as a compendium of these descriptions. All of the following appeared on that single page:

curvaceous blonde
sexy coed
shapely career girl
pretty secretary
pretty flower child
sweet young thing

Subjects and their modifiers were interchangeable. If the career girl was shapely in September, it was the coed who had been shapely the previous July ("Golly," sighed the shapely coed as she and her date left the drive-in theater, "that certainly was exciting. I wonder if the movie was any good"). And if the coed was shapely in July, the secretarial applicant was shapely in November ("Any bad habits, Miss Anderson?" asked the young exec, interviewing a shapely secretarial applicant: "Gumchewing, tardiness, gossiping, chastity?"). And, always, there were sweet young things.

If these women were usually pretty, they were not, as we all know, necessarily bright. They were portrayed as sexually dumb ("You certainly have to hand it to the American woman, which is why so many guys prefer European girls." Oct. 1968) or just basically dim-witted ("Then there was the prostitute who was so dumb she wound up working in a warehouse." Aug. 1968).

Playboy was slightly more generous with men: businessmen were "prosperous," octogenarians "spry" and bachelors were usually "handsome," and remain so to this day. Rarely was an indication given that any man in a joke could not afford one of the stereos advertised a few pages further on, and never was it suggested that a man was ugly (from time to time, they are impotent, defined in July 1968 by the Unabashed Dictionary as "emission impossible"). The beauty of the distaff side, as *Playboy* is fond of referring to the sex, was impugned only for the sake of a good joke such as the following, which concerns a favored *Playboy* practice, voyeurism: "Have you heard about the girl who was so ugly that Peeping Toms would reach in and pull down her shades?" (Oct. 1968)

That first week I opened thousands of envelopes and developed an obscure cramp in my hand as a result of its continuous contact with a letter opener. Each day my energy drained away as quickly as my wastebasket filled up with the mindless contributions of diseased and otherwise impaired citizens. Many contributors wrote copious cover letters describing their lives, their loves and their ambitions, not the least of which was to publish a joke in *Playboy*. The efforts on the parts of these individuals to establish a sense of intimacy with the *Playboy* Party Jokes Editor was truly touching, but I soon grew weary in my role as the Miss Lonelyhearts of the world's amateur humorists. Gentlemen from Africa and Western Europe wrote to say how much they loved the magazine (this suddenly brings to mind the letter sent to the editor that summer by a U.S. Marine sergeant which ended: "Thank you for the June Playmate. It was the biggest kick my boys have had since we knocked off 400 gooks on the Mekong Delta"). A housewife from a small, desolate town in Kansas wrote in conspiratorially: "If my husband ever knew that I went in for this type of thing, he'd simply kill me, so if you decide to publish my jokes, please leave my name out of it and send the check in a plain envelope to my sister who lives in Lawrence." The dear lady then proceeded to relate an anecdote about a man with a schlong of extraordinary dimensions.

Another regular occurrence was far more startling: On any given day I would receive at least a few and often as many as a dozen letters containing the jokes, recited verbatim, from Johnny Carson's opening monologue on *The Tonight Show* four days earlier. More stunning than the plagiarism itself was the fact that invariably the letters began with "I was at a party the other night and a man told me a joke which I thought was so funny that I thought I would send it on to you" or "I've never made up a joke before in my life, but I made up this one the other day. . . ." Equally interesting, I might add, were the entries that contained jokes taken word for word from previous *Playboy* Party Jokes pages.

Then there was the one that ran: "The definition of gross is when your grandmother kisses you good night and she slips you her tongue." This one-liner, like a virus, seemed to have infected large segments of the population, since I received it virtually every day. Needless to say, I demurred on it, but I'm told that people are still sending it in. Great gags, I guess, never die.

The submissions that provided me with my moments of deepest amusement (which became increasingly infrequent as the summer wore on) were those that were clearly the effluvia of deranged imaginations, the publicized hallucinations of individuals from another emotional province. To my unending dismay, the file of such entries that I so carefully kept has been lost and with it some of the most memorable psychic artifacts of our time. Only one of these submissions fails to evaporate in memory. It was so outrageous that I was incapacitated by laugh-

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R.D. Rosen is books editor of The Boston Phoenix.

ter for half an hour, during which several editors appeared at my office door wearing alarmed expressions and inquiring after my health. He lived in Baltimore. His stationery was covered on both sides with spidery handwriting and his jokes were, to say the very least, entirely original. One of the few comprehensible ones read: "What do a ball, a bat, a snake and a circle all have in common? Answer: There [sic] are all sex sembles [sic]." Another one was a story involving a man of small stature who had mounted a very big woman only to "fall in." The punch line, apparently, was exquisitely subtle, for it escaped me altogether.

There is no formal style sheet for the *Playboy* Party Jokes page, merely a set of dispositions. My editor at *Playboy*, who has since gone elsewhere, could only recall one tenet: "You always try to end up with an oral sex joke," he says. "It's good to finish up with muff-diving." Although cunnilingus and fellatio may theoretically provide the best punch lines for a page of jokes, the fact is that the last laugh is just as often about something else. *Playboy* Senior Editor David Stevens, the man who currently edits the Party Jokes Editor's jokes, has a formula: "You want to end with a thigh slapper, one that's a story joke, usually pretty dirty, a positive male joke, not something funny and straight, but risque." Simple enough.

Structurally, *Playboy* jokes fall into four categories: story or narrative ones; "Our Unabashed Dictionary defines" jokes; one-liners which normally begin, "Then there was the . . . "; and limericks, of which *Playboy* is now experiencing a renaissance. The final selection tries to balance the four kinds, using not more than two limericks a page.

Jokes that are unacceptable thematically include toilet jokes, cornball or barnyard humor ("Nothing," says Stevens "about guys wiping their asses with moonbeams in the outhouse") and scatological gags. Also out are very, very black humor and offensive ethnic jokes.

Stevens tries for "one type of joke per issue—you know, one gag, one divorced man, one geriatric, one cunnilingus, etc.," but it isn't always possible to achieve a fair erotic distribution. When asked if he thought the Party Jokes page treated men more favorably than women, Stevens replied, "I don't think so. Castrated men jokes are some of the funniest of all." The public may be further reassured by the fact that Stevens has replaced "sweet young thing," which he found "too cloying," with simply "young thing."

After Stevens sees the jokes, they go to managing editor Shel Wax and editor Arthur Kretchmer, proving that at *Playboy* party jokes are serious business. Hefner himself still insists on having a look at them before they go in the magazine.

The man who forms the first link in this editorial chain, the man who belongs to the great tradition of *Playboy* Party Jokes Editors that includes myself, is a 55-year-old retired foreign service officer named J.F. O'Connor. He has held the position for the last three years, working out of his home in a Maryland suburb. O'Connor himself specializes in limericks and was offered the Party Joke Editorship after *Playboy* had published a collection of his verse in 1970.

Each week he receives an air mail parcel post carton of joke mail from *Playboy* and proceeds to make his selection based on quality, originality and, then,

To be *Playboy* Party Jokes Editor is to be nothing less than a cultural impresario, a great comic provider, the father of fodder for businessmen's lunches, stag parties and cocktail hours

because the same joke often comes from different people in different forms, on priority of submission and "cleverness of the telling." Of the approximately 20,000 that come his way each month, he finds 200 to 250 to his taste, has to edit about 80 percent of those and then send them on. *Playboy* overbuys and keeps a backlog of usable jokes so that, as O'Connor says, "If we want a fag joke, we can always find one."

O'Connor's tastes are catholic. To test him, I asked his opinion of buggery jokes. "Oh," he replied, "they're perfectly usable. A wonderful subject for humor." What he doesn't like are the endless repeats of bad jokes; the countless submissions from little old ladies in California who have obviously read articles on how to make money at home by clipping and send in *Reader Digest* jokes of absolutely no merit; the entries from Africa, India and Pakistan containing jokes so rooted in alien comic modes that O'Connor can make no sense of them. He has, however, bought jokes during the past three years from Australia, Canada, France, Hungary, Yugoslavia and the Philippines.

Burt Reynolds and Linda Lovelace jokes, he reports, are still very much in fashion. Although Watergate is slowly passing out of the comic collective consciousness, he still gets the joke about the Secret Service man telling Tricky Dick that Kissinger has pissed Nixon's name in a snowbank outside the White House, adding that it's in Pat's handwriting. When I was deluged with the same joke six years ago, it was LBJ and the penmanship was Lady Bird's.

O'Connor has made several statistical studies on purchased jokes since October 1971. During that period *Playboy* has bought 658 jokes, of which 461 were submitted by the public-at-large (the rest coming from professional joke-writers and an occasional in-house submission). Of that 461, California has provided the greatest number, 77, or 16.7 percent of the total. California is followed by New York (10.6 percent) and Illinois (6.5 percent). Then he did another chart, adjusting for population: It showed Wyoming, with a population of only 300,000 and two jokes sold, on top with 6.7 jokes per million residents, followed by Arizona (6.1 per million) and New Mexico (4.0 per million). On the population-adjusted chart, California drops to fourth with 3.9 per million. Hawaii, Montana, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Utah and Vermont, for reasons one can only guess at, have not produced one published joke in the last three years.

In another study, O'Connor found that of the 658 *Playboy* Party Jokes published during his reign, 79.3 percent were submitted by men, 6.1 percent by women, 0.7 percent by couples jointly and 13.8 percent by gender unknown.

As an ex-*Playboy* Party Jokes Editor, I ought to be by all rights the life of any get-together today, deploying my arsenal of lethal gags. Guests should swoon gaily at my feet as I fire one joke after another at them with the dour, disinterested air of a professional. Heard a good one lately? I've heard hundreds of thousands. But—and this is indeed embarrassing—I can't remember a single joke without having to consult back issues of the magazine. When someone asks me what my favorite joke of all is, the best I can do is dimly recall one about a man who drinks jet fuel by accident and farts his way to Honolulu. I think it goes something like that. ●

How a Cretan torture chamber became a TV game show

Money Maze

By Jon Arlow

This is a horror story with no victims and no monsters. It begins two years ago when a pleasant fellow named Don Lipp bolts up in bed with a vision. What he sees in the empty space before him is a young married couple running breathlessly through a gigantic maze. And he thinks: what a terrific idea for a television game show.

December 16, 1974. At 7:30 the clean-shaven ABC pages in their scarlet livery are seating the studio audience. The newcomers, who earlier this rainy day were handed tickets in the streets of Manhattan, are now giggling and gasping. It is not easy to make regular game show watchers giggle and gasp. They have already seen grown men slide paper plates off their backsides into a bucket to *Beat the Clock* and young housewives racing their shopping carts up and down the aisles of *Supermarket Sweep*. What they see now is the gigantic set of the most expensive venture in the history of game shows, one that may yet prove to be one of the genre's most spectacular disasters. Lipp's vision has become *The Money Maze*.

The maze in the pit at their feet is 40 by 45 feet and 6 feet deep, a labyrinth of flashing lights and corridors painted salmon pink, blood red, lollipop yellow and silver. Above them is a galaxy of hot, bright lights. Everywhere there are cameras: two at the back of the maze, two on the stage up in front of it, two more hovering 30 feet over the front of the set in a choir loft.

Twenty minutes to taping, announcer Alan Kalter appears on stage to lead the audience through a series of responses. "Folks, this is our very first show, and we desperately need your help to make it a success. And this has to be a GREAT show, because if we don't last for ten years, they won't be able to pay back the cost of this maze. So I'm going to cue you to applaud, and let's HEAR it!

"Sheeee just went through that maze AND SHE WON!"

Restrained applause.

"Now look, folks. I wanna HEAR it. Anyone who isn't applauding is gonna be locked up in that maze for a week or two. So let's try it again.

"Weeee're giving away FRANCE!"

Thunderous applause.

Kalter then tries to explain the game. Five minutes to taping, emcee Nick Clooney, with a grin so wide and shiny that he looks as if he is trying to eat a harmonica, jogs onto the stage and shouts into the studio: "DO YOU UNDERSTAND THE GAME?"

"NO!"

"You'll catch on. It's really very simple. We put four Christians on this side of the maze and two lions over there. . . ."

Nervous laughter. The boy next to me whispers to his girlfriend, "You couldn't get *me* down into that thing."

"Hey, girls!" Clooney calls out. "How many of you have never been in a game show audience before? Well, let me warn you, you're gonna look ten pounds fatter on TV, so if you want to leave, you'd better do it now!"

Clooney spends almost as much of the next half hour explaining the game as he does directing it. He tells the contestants—two married couples—that they will have to "earn the right to go to the maze" by scoring points in an initial quiz round. He tells the round winner to step into the "crow's nest" and direct his mate to one of the maze's "flashing red-hot buttons." Should the sprinting primate hit that button within the allotted 15 seconds, she will be rewarded with a television, or a weekend in Mexico City, or perhaps a trash compactor.

New rules for round two. Clooney doles out 30 seconds for the next labor: husband and wife must enter the maze through different doors and meet each other at the center turnstile.

And why do they do this? Because only the survivors play round three, "The Ten Thousand Dollar Dash." What happens is that a one and four zeros light up at five locations in the maze and the elevated mate directs the running spouse to the buttons that correspond to the numbers and then the runner has to leave the maze and cross the finish line, all in 60 seconds. They can win less than $10,000 if they hit the one and less than four zeroes and get back to the finish line in time, but if they don't hit at least the one they get nothing and. . . .

It is very complicated. It does not go well. Clooney fluffs his lines. The questions are too hard. The winners of the "Couple-Up Sprint" embrace in a position with which they do not seem to be unfamiliar. The frenzied losing husband knocks over one of the maze's walls. Fi-

PHOTOGRAPHS BY PETER ANGELO SIMON

Jon Arlow works for a publishing house in New York.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY PETER ANGELO SIMON

nally, during the Dash, the winners hit only two of the five buttons (a one and a zero), giving them a total of $10 cash.

Mike Brockman, vice-president of Daytime Programming for ABC Entertainment, watches the studio audience as they grumble and depart. Sometime in the next 24 hours he will decide to throw this tape out and shoot the premiere over again. This evening, ABC has paid the salaries of 50 cameramen, stagehands, video operators and technicians, 1 nurse, 14 writers, directors and producers for Don Lipp's production company and 10 pages, and in addition to all this there is the cost of studio rental and electricity. I ask him if he is worried, and, of course, he is not.

"Look. This is a difficult show to do. Its realities don't begin to take place until performance."

Meanwhile, the two married couples are shucking their matching safari suits and drinking coffee. "I couldn't hear your directions over all that shouting in the audience," says the winning wife to her husband. "I felt like a guinea pig in there."

As if on cue, a stagehand pops out of the maze and says, to no one in particular, "I'm getting dizzy! Sweeping! Sweeping!"

"That's okay," says the losing wife. "*She* came out with $10. All *we* got was some Reddi-Wip for our Swiss Miss."

The mystery that had brought me to the studio was this: how and why had a Cretan torture chamber been excavated and signed on at ABC at unprecedented cost?

Two years ago, no one really needed terrific ideas for game shows. The soap operas, with their tortured kinship catalogs, were the undisputed power in daytime television. ABC and NBC aired a few games, but CBS was filling its soapless slots with situation comedy reruns.

Still, Lipp knew that he had found the concept that would set him up in business for himself. Since the early '50s, after he had left his father's New Jersey butcher shop and the long rolls of waxy butcher paper covered with his unpublished poems, he had worked for others, first on a radio program called *Second Chance*, later for a seemingly endless series of video game shows. "I cut a lot of cardboard then," he says, "and I spent a lot of dreary nights in lonely hotel rooms."

Then Lipp walked into Michael Brockman's office with a mock-up under his arm and said, "Mike, I've got this crazy idea." Brockman was enthusiastic, as he tells it, but to him the maze was and remains nothing more than a big game board. The quiz round that would get the couples into the maze needed work. He passed on the idea.

So Lipp began a tour of the Rocks: 30 Rock, the NBC building, named for its address at Rockefeller Center; Black Rock, the CBS building, named for its stone facing; and finally back to Little Rock, ABC, the network where Patty Hearst is said to be hiding out as the star of a Saturday night situation comedy. In the interim Brockman had been promoted, Lipp had entered into partnership with Dick Cavett's Daphne Productions, Inc., and the money maze idea had been funded and dropped by one of the other networks.

And the Great Game Show Comeback of '74 had begun.

It hadn't happened because of the onset of the Depression Psychology in America, although few will say that hard times have not helped the quiz biz. What *had* happened, according to Brockman, was that the sitcoms had stopped "delivering enough women." In any case, CBS had run out of sitcoms that could sustain a 260 show-per-year stripping, and the network had gone back into the game field in a big way for the first time since the scandals of the '50s. On top of this, there was a little gift to the game show developers from the Federal Communications Commission. This was the Prime Access Rule, which left hundreds of affiliate TV stations across the country to their own devices in programming their 7:30 p.m. time slots. Many stations turned to syndicated game shows as a source of cheap, profitable entertainment. And the final stroke of good fortune came for the developers on November 17, 1974, when the Nielsen ratings revealed that CBS had taken a healthy lead in daytime TV, partly due to the spectacular success of its *Match Game '74*.

The demand for game shows exceeded the supply.

Brockman gave the go-ahead on *The Money Maze*. When I asked him about his decision recently, he insisted that he had had a choice in the matter, that there were other options. But he did admit that he would have soon had to drop *The Brady Bunch* reruns from his morning lineup, and that he hadn't "the foggiest idea" what its replacement would have been.

10:00 a.m., December 21. In a tiny room at Daphne/Lipp in the Architect's Building on Park Avenue, eight men and women squirm in their folding chair-desks and fill in questionnaires. Last week the husbands saw an ad in the New York *Times*:

WIN $10,000
and FABULOUS PRIZES
New TV show wants upright
lively married couples

They read the ad to their wives, and the wives said, "Why not?"

Now they have been given three lines on a mimeographed sheet to describe their lives together, and a warning that they are not eligible if they are not legally married. There is some awful tension in this room, and I walk into the next office, where Contestant Coordinator Barbara Moscow is listening impatiently to someone on the telephone.

"Yup . . . yeah . . . well, we're looking for *young Americans*. Yup. Right. Bye."

On her desk is a stack of yesterday's applications, each with a stapled Polaroid snapshot and a staff comment scrawled across the top: "He's up and quick" or "She's smiley but quiet." Moscow snaps up a bunch of blue test booklets and returns to the would-be contestants. They are a timid, badly dressed lot, and she, in her jeans and yoke-stitched western blouse, gives them a big, brassy, friendly smile.

"By the way, I forgot to tell you before: in the question round, if you sweep a category, you run for prizes; you know, all those things you'd *never* be interested in, washers, dryers. . . ."

Titters from all assembled.

Moscow hands out the General Information Test. It has questions in it like NAME THE *AUTHOR* OF *THE ILIAD* and FILL IN THE MISSING WORD: "GATHER YE_____WHILE YE MAY."

After the written test, Moscow gives an oral one. She is looking for speed, and things go slowly at first.

"Come on, everyone. You've only got a half hour to show me that you can be enthusiAStic. The category is Vegetables. The first clue is . . . CASABA!"

"Melon!"

"WAX!"

"Beans!"

The next category is "Old" Words. All goes well until THEY NEVER DIE. "No one has an answer?" Utter silence. "Can't anybody even guess?"

"Men?"

"No, it's Old Soldiers."

The eight hopefuls outdo each other in sighs that are meant to indicate that they really knew the answer, that it had just slipped their minds.

The next task for each couple is to prepare a short self-introduction. Moscow and I retire to the office.

"There's no one in there," she says

to me, *sotto voce.*

"I thought maybe the couple in the front—"

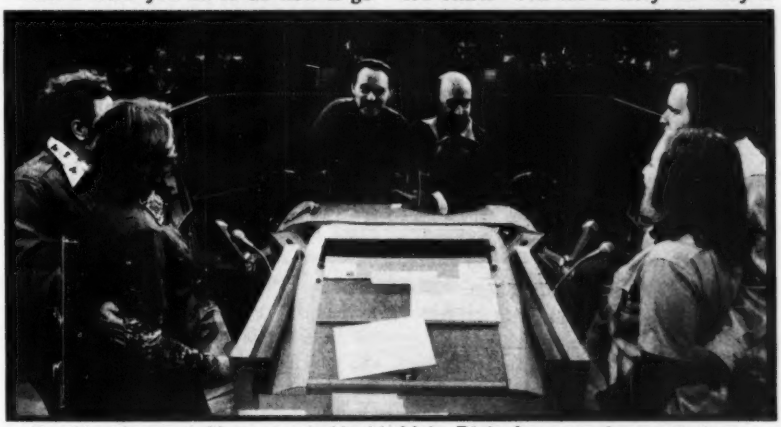
"Nope."

"How can you tell?"

She shakes her head and drops the test booklets. "It's a dead group."

Still, couple after couple, they get up and introduce themselves. He's a computer programmer and she's a housewife with a daughter, 4, who already has her own library card, and they got up at 6 this morning to drive 55 miles from New Jersey. The next couple came from Soho, and he's a free-lance filmmaker and this is his wife, and across from them is the couple ("I'm 47, she's 36") who work for the city government and every day Mayor Beame is announcing more staff cutbacks. The last husband says, "I'm in the banking industry," and then he stumbles and says, "No, the banking field."

"Okay," says Barbara Moscow. "What I want you all to do now is go home and forget that you were ever here. If we call you up, you'll be pleasantly surprised, and if we don't, well at least it was an interesting experience, right?"



Don Lipp (center left) surrounded by his Moby Dick of a game show come true.

Two days before Christmas, one hour before the premiere of *The Money Maze,* Mike Brockman slaps the desk in his 37th floor office at Little Rock and says, "I get *very* upset when I hear all that dialogue about game shows being the quintessence of greed. Everybody does a number on Monty's *Let's Make a Deal.* I swear to you, I've been out there, I've watched those people on the line when they're selected, I've sat in the audience and watched the show, and *those people couldn't care less* whether they win or lose. They are there to have a party and to be part of the experience. And they have a lot of fun.

"Daytime is an area of television that is unsung. People have a tendency to have stereotyped notions of what it is."

I ask him if he thinks there is room in daytime for formats other than games and soaps. His hand sweeps out, palm up, in a shrug.

"Nobody goes out of his way to limit the field to game and serial. The problem is finding a format that shows it has sufficient audience *appeal* on a 52-week basis. That's a tremendous amount of product to produce. We had talked about putting the 90-minute Playbreaks on a daily basis, using 130 original telecasts a year and repeating each once. That sounds terrific until you realize that that would require at least 260 scripts so that you can afford to throw out half of them, and then you need two or three drafts of the ones you keep. There just isn't that much material that would justify that kind of investment. . . .

"But, you know, the first thing that kids do when they're growing up is to start playing games. They all play games. It's either 'Tell me a story' or 'Play a game.' Well: there's television!"

At 4:00 o'clock we turn to the television on his windowsill and watch the premiere. *The Money Maze* is tight and fast, now. The Couple-Up Sprint has been cut forever from the show. Clooney's fluffing is substantially diminished. The contestants are tossing the questions back and forth in what Brockman calls the "Hot Potato" Round. Finally, the two couples tie, they both run the maze, they both push all the right buttons, they both win $10,000. Clooney is laughing and screaming OH NO, the audience is on its feet, and the piped-in xylophone plays its victorious ditty over and over again.

Brockman is happy. He likes that they're giving away money, it's good for the show's ratings. And after all, $20,000 is a drop in the bucket; on the production of *The Money Maze* pilot alone he spent nearly $300,000, two and a half times the normal cost of a game show pilot.

"I don't know how many more mazes I can afford," he admits. "The best thing you can hope for in these situations is if you have an idea you believe in and you go through the normal steps of development, the rest of it is up to the viewers. There is no bench mark."

New Year's Eve is tomorrow, and it has been a busy, heady week for Don Lipp. In four days he will be 45 years old, and for the first time in his life he has his own show on the air. The ratings are trickling in: *The Money Maze* has tripled ABC's Los Angeles share on the first day. There has been no indication during this holiday season that in a few weeks his show will drop to the very bottom of the daytime ratings chart, prompting the creation of new gimmicks to spruce up the game's basic format. Now, he reminisces about his hard times and the days when *he* was a reporter, and then his kids call up and ask him to bring them ice cream when he comes home, and he says, yes, and he is a very happy man.

And I wonder, is *this* the minotaur of the maze?

So I ask him, what about the Christians and the lions, the rats, the Skinner box? What is the maze to him? And, of course, he says it is only a game. But then he begins to tell a story.

It seems that after one of the tapings he was talking to The Top Man at ABC, who said he felt that "there was something happening in that studio that was profound, that was different from what he had ever seen.

"And I suggested that there was a bond with Moby Dick. We started talking about the metaphysical implications of the maze. I've been wrestling with this thing, literally wrestling, almost two years, and I've worked on a lot of shows, and this one became a very important personal challenge to me because it's so different and so . . . large and so . . . eager to be embraced. And I wanted to get my arms around this thing—and I almost have, to my satisfaction.

"So it became my Moby Dick, you know, to *find* something that would be special and unique and hopefully entertaining, and full of the privates of Life.

"And, I thought, this maze, why am I wandering through a maze, mentally, emotionally, trying to work out a maze show?

"The answer is, I don't know. Not at this time in my life.

"But to me, the maze represents Getting Through—the day, the week, the job, the month, the marriage, the life. There's a deep unconscious satisfaction in the game. There's something there that's a little more than meets the eye." ●

BOOKS

The inside skinny

By Geoffrey Wolff

Conversations with Kennedy *by Benjamin C. Bradlee.* Norton (251 pp., $7.95).
The Last Nixon Watch *by John Osborne, with the cartoons of Paul Szep.* New Republic Book Company (246 pp., $7.95).

Prophecy is journalism's occupational malady. And because Washington belongs less to its governors than to its reporters, the latter paid to divine what the former would prefer to ignore, augury is practiced there to an almost lunatic degree so that it often seems to matter less what you know than when you found it out. What Walter Cronkite will announce 15 minutes later, or the *Post* and *Times* report tomorrow morning, are the sustaining juices of journalism, and constitute the gossip that fuels Washington journalism's professional as well as social enterprises. By divination, the reporter or columnist proves that he's wired in, has got the true gen, the inside skinny. He's able to offer a beat on the entire unwised-up country, and people will pay dearly—in coin or companionship—to know—if only for a few hours—what their country cousins do not.

Time and *Newsweek*, originally contrived as digests of the week that was, have come increasingly (and often absurdly) to despise the past tense and bank on the future, because for a magazine sold on Monday, what happened last Tuesday enjoys a world less glitter than what might happen next Sunday, or during the next election, or midway through the coming Ice Age. The future is also safer than the past, licensing fancy and forgiving error. Readers seldom complain in letters to the editors of *Time* and *Newsweek* about the inaccurate representation of events yet to transpire. Nevertheless, accuracy is prized—if not by readers then by the keepers and colleagues of journalism's soothsayers. It is an abomination not to be wise in Washington, to be in the dark. Sooner or later, time brings *Time* to account, and scorekeepers discover what the future held.

During the years of John Kennedy's presidency, Benjamin Bradlee had a virtual lock on the inside skinny at the White House.* (Only Charlie Bartlett was closer—among journalists—to the President.) As *Newsweek*'s bureau chief in Washington, Bradlee scored beat after beat against *Time* and even against the dailies, a rarity in a journalistic system whereby the news magazines are usually compelled to serve up overcooked scraps from what newspapers served up earlier, half-baked. Bradlee's privileged access to Kennedy was due in large measure to the affection and esteem in which they, and their wives, held one another. But it was due also, and in no small part, to the uses to which a president and a reporter might put each other. (In Washington it is common to hear a person commended almost entirely in terms of utility: "You must meet him; you'll find him useful.") Thus Bradlee recollects that Kennedy "valued my journalism most when it carried his water." Again and again Bradlee feels himself being used by Kennedy, usually resists, sometimes submits. For Bradlee the friendship was priceless to his career, and he used it "without embarrassment" to deliver from close up those confirming details about appearance and attitude and manner that readers so relish.

Conversations with Kennedy is a record assembled from 150 encounters between Bradlee and Kennedy, beginning in 1959 and ending shortly before the assassination in Dallas. Despite Kennedy's nervousness about White House historians, "always there with their pencils out," Bradlee dictated into a tape recorder what passed between him and the President during their many meetings, most of which were social in character. After he began keeping this record, and at his wife Tony's urging, he told Kennedy about it, and the President requested only that Bradlee not publish their conversations till at least five years after he had left the White House. Certainly he had full evidence of Bradlee's affection for him, but he did not utterly trust him—nor did Bradlee always trust Kennedy.

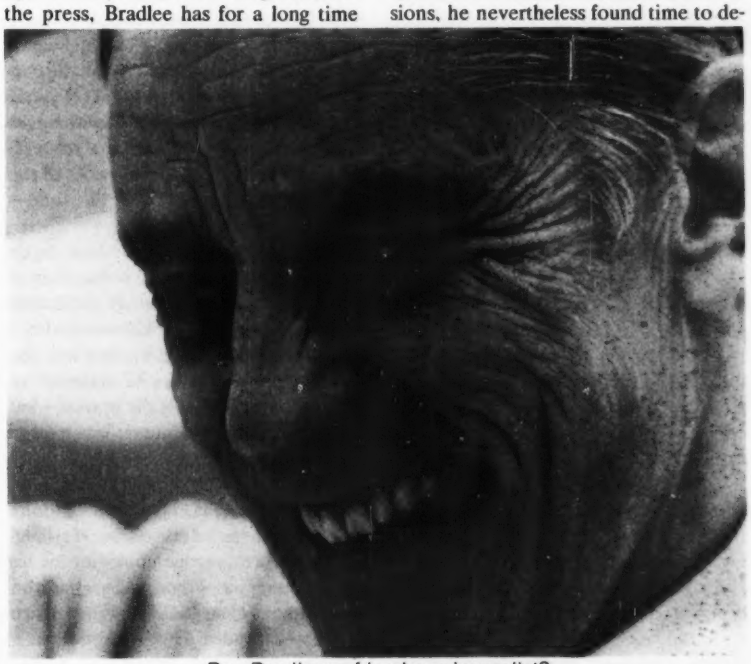
When Jackie Kennedy returned from Dallas with her husband's body, Bradlee was at Bethesda Naval Hospital waiting for her: " 'Oh Benny, do you want to hear what happened?' and then quickly added 'But not as a reporter for *Newsweek*, okay?' I felt badly that she obviously felt she had to be that careful in that awful moment about the old problem, and was about to proclaim my innocence as usual, when she started telling us of the actual shooting." The old problem is expressed by a question Bradlee asks Bradlee: "What, in fact, was I? A friend, or a journalist?" Because of their friendship, Bradlee gave Kennedy more than he should have, no doubt, including the right of clearance on some things written about him and his administration. "I never wrote less than I knew about him, filing the good with the bad. But obviously, the information Kennedy gave me tended to put him and his policies in a favorable light. . . . If I was had, so be it; I doubt I will ever be so close to a political figure again."

Bradlee's access to Kennedy for background about him and his brothers (who were, of course, the subjects of many, many cover stories) and for private details of their comings and goings helped account for the dramatic circulation rise *Newsweek* began during the Kennedy years, a rise that caused Bradlee's opposite number at *Time*—Hugh Sidey—bad dreams at night. And he pumped Kennedy for his interests and opinions so that he could anticipate what might occupy his attention and provoke his actions in the immediate future. In fact this book, which mingles (in a sometimes confusing manner) the moment of the encounter, some unidentifiable moment not long after, and the recent time of the book's writing, is absorbed utterly in what will come to pass—what has not passed. Bradlee wants to know from Kennedy what

*There was one bit of alarming intelligence given Bradlee by Kennedy that Bradlee chose not to believe or to print. The President told the journalist that a hoodlum had been hired by the Teamsters, and had been sent to Washington with a pistol and silencer to assassinate Attorney General Robert Kennedy. Bradlee writes: "I found this one a little hard to believe, but the president was obviously serious." Bradlee does not explain why he refused to print the story, but his reasons would not, I am sure, be without bearing on the antagonism of the respectable press to conspiracy theories of all kinds.

Time will have on next week's cover, and learns. Kennedy wants to know about an upcoming *Newsweek* story on CIA Director John McCone. Bradlee wants to scoop the world for a few hours on the story of Gary Power's return from Russia. Again and again, the preoccupation of reporter and president is *what's next, what's coming,* often at the expense of what was what. The President shared Bradlee's preoccupation because he genuinely liked reporters and appreciated their needs, means and special interests.

Perhaps in reaction against the role he played as Mr. Inside at the White House, and because he saw close up Kennedy's effective manipulation of the press, Bradlee has for a long time campaigned for the execution of The Informed Source and his kinsman, An Administration Spokesman. The Washington *Post*, of which Bradlee is executive editor, has from time to time boycotted such institutions as the backgrounder, which allows officials to say in private what they won't admit in public and thereby evade responsibility for their sentiments. But so far no good has come of Bradlee's skirmishes.



Ben Bradlee: a friend or a journalist?

PHOTOGRAPH BY DIANA H. WALKER

The Last Nixon Watch is a collection of John Osborne's weekly columns for *The New Republic,* all of which are given over to a reconstruction of a falling president's immediate past. Grit is grease for Osborne's wheels. He had no privileged access to Nixon, and seemed to wish none. He writes on his own authority: what he believes to be true, he says, and takes as his responsibility. "I don't deal in that kind of crap," he writes about such protective dodges as "sources close to the Vice President said."

Nevertheless, so accurate has he been in his reports of Nixon's acts, motives and health that he actually enjoyed the grudging esteem of the former president's accomplices. Osborne wouldn't ever use a word like *accomplice* to describe the men around Nixon. He respects the office and does not trade in innuendo or invective. Writing for a journal second to none in its distaste for Nixon, and writing as an observer quicker than any to note and denounce Nixon's miserable disloyalties and evasions, he nevertheless found time to denounce Clark Mollenhoff for his bearish manners at a press conference, and the press in general for its haste to assume the accuracy of every rumor that discredited Nixon: "The tendency to equate suspicion and allegation with guilt and to report as established or assumable fact assertions, deductions and rumors whose sole virtue is that they discredit public persons . . . has been carried way beyond tolerable bounds."

It is useful to establish Osborne's civility and restraint for those unfamiliar with him and his virtues because he makes, in this book, a most astounding charge, often rumored but seldom published. To wit, that Nixon was not himself during his last year in office, that he had undergone a fundamental personality change, that he was, to put it plainly, nuts. In an introductory chapter to *The Last Nixon Watch,* and in a couple of columns written just before and after the resignation, Osborne puts together in fine detail what Nixon, Haig, St. Clair, Ziegler and Buzhardt were cooking up, and he concludes that Nixon's actions were not rational: "His erratic behavior in the final days and hours [in office] coupled with some aspects of his behavior during his presidency, convinced an assistant involved in the final discussions that the President was mentally ill and had been for many years."

Osborne puts great stock in this assistant's opinion, not the least because the man liked and admired Nixon and had been his friend even before the campaign of 1968. He also reproduces in this book, with great effect, a transcription of Alexander Butterfield's testimony regarding Nixon's working habits, submitted to the House Committee on Impeachment. Seems that Nixon insulated himself from the day-to-day demands of office not to occupy himself with matters of high public estate but to fuss over nibshit details: the design of public toilets on White House property, or of those high-school band costumes imposed for a while on the White House guard. Osborne even speculated in print on the possibility that Nixon "might be driven to accomplish with a bullet what phlebitis might have accomplished," and submitted that his frantic pace during a state visit to Russia and Egypt (*escape* is the better word) while he was suffering from phlebitis was suicidal.

Interestingly enough, but not very surprisingly, Kennedy would have seconded Osborne's judgment. Bradlee reports that following the infamous farewell press conference in 1962, when Nixon promised to remove his much-kicked public self from the range of those who so loved to kick him, Kennedy said he believed Nixon (would that he had kept that one promise!) was "sick, sick, sick. Nobody could talk like that and be normal." Elsewhere, he remarked with glee that Eisenhower wouldn't invite Nixon to Camp David ("wouldn't have him on the place," in the anglicized version Harold MacMillan gave President Kennedy), and called him a "cheap bastard; that's all there is to it."

So he was; so he was. The odd thing though (and it is possible to make more of this, perhaps, than it deserves) is that in many of the offenses against the state that most angered the state's citizenry, Kennedy anticipated Nixon. Kennedy, too, talked about "getting"

his enemies—"Don't get mad, get even" was almost a watchword. Kennedy, too, dabbled in the pornography J. Edgar Hoover peddled, to provoke fear and win favor: "Boy," said Kennedy, "the dirt he had on those senators." Kennedy, too, abused the files of the Internal Revenue Service. The two presidents even shared—superficially—certain personal characteristics. Both hid their emotions (Bradlee mentions this several times) and both were cruelly neglectful of their wives during campaigns, and their wives both appeared in public with shades drawn down across their own emotions. Kennedy and his brother Robert were no strangers to the concept of an enemies' list—what they would have called a shit list—and for a while Bradlee was on it for criticizing Kennedy's thin skin regarding press criticism. Kennedy, remember, canceled the White House subscriptions to the New York *Herald Tribune*, because the paper hurt his feelings.

But President Kennedy would never have been so stupid as to commit his list of enemies to print, and he would have had no need of a minor subordinate to remind him who those enemies were. Of course, there is a world between Nixon and Kennedy. If style and manners were all there were to the difference—if one is revered and the other despised for dress, physiognomy, speech and self-possession—then we are a sad lot of citizens. Kennedy's self-deprecating wit and good looks qualified him for membership in a men's club that would reject Nixon for pushiness and self-consciousness, but the country does not select its heroes for their clubability. Kennedy was a complexly good man, and Nixon was complexly corrupt.

That outrageous statement can't be proved, but by the evidence in these two books it can be felt, can be read like a complicated novel of character in a profusion of details. Both of these books inspire absolute trust: they mean well by their readers and were written for no other reason than to tell truths. Conventional wisdom for some time now has had it that Nixon was ruined by the taped records of his conversations, and in the narrow, immediate sense—his legal impeachability—the tapes did bring him down. But had there been no tapes, he still would have stood revealed as neurotically sour, a chronic me-firster suffering from a terminal case of disloyalty—to his countrymen and his colleagues. Someone close to him, that is, would have done a Bradlee on him, sooner or later. Since the time of Emmet John Hughes' kiss-and-tell study of Eisenhower—the book that caused Bradlee to disclose to Kennedy his own record of presidential conversations—it has been assumed that one of those damned guys "with their pencils out" would portray his president as he was. There is no place to hide, really.

Theodore White is hobbled by his civility, and his need to keep the good will of sources he must use on his next trip to the well, four years later, but he cuts pretty close to the bone. By writing an apostrophe to his brother, incidentally revealing his own pathetic subservience to him, Sam Houston Johnson opened many windows on that president. Doris Kearns, a professor at Harvard and White House Fellow during Johnson's worst years in office, became his intimate friend (no innuendo is intended, or should be taken). He confided everything to her in almost nightly conversations: his dreams of the previous night, his angers. And he knew from the beginning that she would write them down and publish them, though he feebly, from time to time, said he hoped she would not. Joe McGinniss was given freedom to report on the selling of Nixon by advertising wizards. Hunter Thompson, for Christ's sake, was given a close look at McGovern's feelings about Eagleton immediately after the elections of 1972.

Willy-nilly, no president can hope for long to escape his demystification, and, moreover, for all their evasiveness—professional and personal—it is probable that none of them wishes to die unrevealed. Which would explain why Johnson so tamely accepted Doris Kearns' examination, why Nixon taped himself out of office, and why Kennedy gave Bradlee permission to publish their private conversations. And you and I may thank whatever kink it is in the corporate presidential character that makes them offer up their private selves for our scrutiny. It keeps them just a little bit in control, keeps them out of the kinds of trouble—most of the time—that could land them in jail.

Finally, Bradlee has been slammed in print, prior to publication of *Conversations with Kennedy*, for having written the book at all. There have been speculations regarding his motive. The book has its faults—its hash-up of chronology is probably the gravest—but its motivation is obvious. It was written in friendship, and it does nothing but light Kennedy up, often at the expense of Bradlee's own reputation. I don't believe that the editor of the Washington *Post* owes anyone apologies for his performance as a journalist, but this book makes clear that when the crunch comes—friendship or journalism—Bradlee goes with friendship, having first taken pains in the selection of his friends.

MUSIC

The ubiquitous Allen Toussaint goes on the road

By Janet Maslin

"This *sucks*, growled some surly 15-year-old write-off in the lobby, taking another swig of what looked and smelled like Kool-Aid (but was probably some species of fruity wine) as he glared spitefully at the auditorium door. Inside, the mood was even uglier: periodic calls for the headliners ("Little Feat!") peppered the warm-up act's performance, while one precocious young drunkard insisted on clapping loudly *during* songs, not after them ("They need all the help they can get," he proclaimed). No one seemed to know or care that this Boston date was the singer-pianist's first official solo performance, that he was none other than Allen Toussaint, or that his legendary career dates back to well before most of this audience was born.

Toussaint's name is, to most pop listeners, as unfamiliar as his music is ubiquitous. A native of New Orleans, he had earned such a reputation as a gifted musical mimic that, while still in his

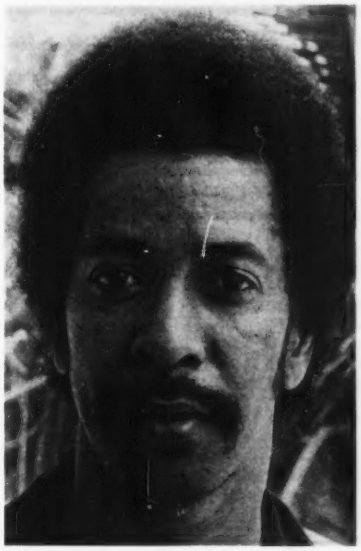
teens, he was summoned to supply the piano tracks for a Fats Domino record while Fats was out of town. He signed his first recording contract in 1955, right around the time he wrote "Java," which became an enormous hit for Al Hirt; "Whipped Cream," a Toussaint song of similar vintage, was subsequently picked up by Herb Alpert. Among his other compositions: "Fortune Teller" (recorded by both Benny Spellman and the Rolling Stones), "Ruler of My Heart" (recorded as "Pain In My Heart" by Otis Redding), "Yes We Can" (Lee Dorsey and then the Pointer Sisters), "Occapella" (Dorsey, Van Dyke Parks, Ringo Starr), "Performance" (Browning Bryant, Joe Cocker) and "Brickyard Blues" (Frankie Miller, Maria Muldaur, Three Dog Night).

As a producer—for Dorsey, Chris Kenner ("I Like It Like That," "Land of a Thousand Dances"), Jesse Hill ("Ooh Pooh Pah Doo"), the Meters, the Band (horn arrangements on "Life Is A Carnival") and Dr. John—he has been even more omnipresent. And as a writer/producer—from "Mother-in-Law" with Ernie K-Doe to "Working In A Coal Mine" with Dorsey to the current "Lady Marmalade" with Labelle—he is positively irresistible. Toussaint songs don't adhere to any particular style, and his production employs no single texture; his records' main distinction is the way they withstand changing tastes (play the 1961 hit "Mother-in-Law" sometime and see if it sounds dated). And, of course, the fact that they're so striking.

But Toussaint's songs, as interpreted by the author and his 15-piece backup ensemble that rowdy evening, weren't sounding as lively as usual; there were no particular false moves you could pinpoint, just a vague dearth of stage presence. The same thing is true, though to a lesser degree, of *Southern Nights*, the fourth and most recent Toussaint solo album, the one he was on tour to promote. But on the morning after his Boston set the lean, graceful, soft-spoken and wholly unflappable concert debutante—he *has* performed live before, but never a full set with solo billing—was sounding rather philosophical about this phase of his career. On recording and performing: "I would hope that we could do this well, but this at best wouldn't be what I want to do in my life." On why he's made solo records: "Every time I've ever made an album I've been *asked* to make one. That's why there's a ten-year lapse." And on this particular tour: "This is promotional, right? It'll last six days, and after that I'm home for-*ever*."

Home is still New Orleans, where the relatively reclusive Toussaint (whose name is pronounced "Tucson" by its owner, "Two-*saint*" by most everybody else) and his partner Marshall Sehorn base their SanSu Enterprises and where their Sea-Saint Studio is located. (The exact workings of the partnership are difficult for either party to describe, but Sehorn, who pointed to a lamp in Toussaint's hotel suite and explained that it was about as musical as he was, is evidently responsible for the business end.) Toussaint likes to do most of his producing at Sea-Saint: "It's one way of assuring that if I'm instrumental to a project, all the things that are instrumental to *me* come with it. If I go somewhere else, I'm always a visitor. As much as I'd like to feel international, I feel like a visitor everywhere."

But he bridles slightly at the suggestion that "you stay home and *they* come to *you*" is any way to describe his *modus operandi*: "Some interviews have been so misconstrued that I guess I'm sticky about that." Despite the overwhelming gentleness of his manner, Toussaint has apparently been depicted in the past as something of an autocrat. ("Not that," he amends. "Slightly worse.") Still, when asked about rumors that he may be producing Harry Nilsson in the near future, he explains—very politely, you understand—that "to be perfectly honest, when I first heard about Nilsson was when Nilsson was coming to New Orleans."



Toussaint: music for his neighborhood.

Though renowned in some circles for his long pauses, blank stares and cryptic phrasings, Toussaint waxes quite eloquent in describing his production techniques, at least as they apply to other people. He doesn't so much instruct his female vocalists as coax and cajole them ("Put your hand on your hip and feel v-e-r-y sassy about what you doin', even if you have to fall in love . . . *love*. Close yo' eyes and *git* you a lover"). But whomever he records, he tries "to get to the inflections and highlights in their voice. Some people have a couple, most people have one good highlight. So you see where that is and you drive your way somewhere around up to that and tease it—and then you may want to go on and get it, show it off." Understandably, he doesn't feel it would be fair to cite examples of exactly whose highlight is where. But he will talk about one recent exception to this rule: "Labelle has so many things more than a normal person or a normal artist that it's taken with a slightly different attitude. I mean, Labelle is a different kind of ready than most people.

"Some people's vocals match better with certain types of rhythms and certain types of horns, or no horns. Some have to go with the double-reed type horns because of the way their voice sounds. Some people tend to sound like they're screamin' a lot, so to make them sound like they're not screamin' as much you may put somethin' else that does that whole number out loud, so you can hear what it would *really* be like if this was a screamin' record. You put something on top of them so you can let them get back under. And some people are cool till the point that it gets so cool it would go too sweet, so you put just enough negative over there to counterbalance that. So they will sound really cool now, because you trapped it."

Toussaint has a harder time describing—and, perhaps, doing—both writing and production for himself. When it comes to other artists, he likes "to get as involved as I can with them, to get little things that you don't tell people but if someone's around long enough they'll see them—maybe things you would really like to express but didn't know you could do it musically." But he knows himself too well to separate the salient details from less consequential ones. And when he composes, "I can write for someone else and know that I did write for them. But I don't know when I'm writing for myself; I don't inspire myself the way other people do. The songs that I just do on my own are ones I have to do, because they

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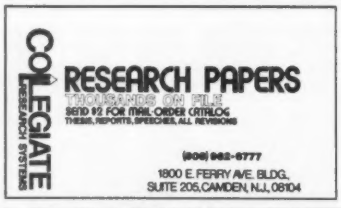
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agitate you so much that you can't do nothin' else: here they come. You write that so you can get on to the next one."

Still, he is probably more satisfied with his songwriting on *Southern Nights* than he is with the production. "It wasn't done straight through, and the continuity was affected. Something would be done in the midst of other things and just left there—you get it, sure, but a week later it sounds like stale cake. That, to me, is too long a concept. The freshness is off-balance, and even if one doesn't know what the problems have been—well, something is not quite Marvin Gayeish about it."

As accustomed as he is to scrutinizing the abilities of others, Toussaint could hardly have helped being self-conscious when making a record of his own. But he seems so perfectly controlled, in both his manner and his work, and so fully equipped to turn out hits at will that the elusiveness—"stubbornness," he calls it—of *Southern Nights* seems almost deliberate. It may indeed be.

"This is very personal and near to me—there's nothing much international about it. It's what happened when I was a child in my neighborhood and the whole thing . . . in a way, the music is *only* for my neighborhood because it was that at the time. And I'm not sure, in my whole life, if it didn't only belong to them. Like I'm not sure if Ravi Shankar should be able to sell in Berlin. There's just no reason why he should have to sell there—I don't care how good he is, his music may not be for them. If they can dig it as quickly as his people from home, something must be wrong."

******Katy Lied**, *Steely Dan* (ABC/Dunhill). The fourth album by rock's most gifted (and ironically sleaziest) jazz-tinged hipsters doesn't expand on their past work so much as continue it—which is just fine, if you've settled into as sublimely languid a groove as they have. Lighthearted visions of death, drunkenness and debauchery.

****Stars,** *Cher* (Warner Bros.). A failure, yes, but what a magnificent mess. Jimmy Webb's lush production and eccentric arrangements guide the singer through uncharacteristically familiar material in a (sometimes successful) attempt to bring out a more intimate, earnest side than the one Cher usually exposes. A worthy and interesting experiment, but her Top-40 fans are likely to be disappointed.

Good riddance to a hard-hearted amnesty

FINAL TRIBUTE

By David Zucchino

No man escapes or gets beyond the reach
Of my defaming tongue, supposing he
Has done a wrong to my brethren or to me

from *The Pardoner's Prologue*
Geoffrey Chaucer

The timing of its passing was unfortunate, coming as it did on April Fool's Day. "Earned re-entry," President Ford called it, and its end last month was shrouded in the worst sort of black humor. The war so many had refused to fight was about to be lost, forcing a hard look back at those who said no. The nation watched the flames, saved the orphans and wondered. The deserters, the dodgers—were they right after all?

Cynics had cracked wry jokes when Ford announced the ill-fated clemency program last September. An American Civil Liberties Union lawyer said Ford had extended the war another two years, "this time against our own men." Yet amnesty died without incident. It was back page stuff, confined to a terse release from the Presidential Clemency Board. There was no official statement from Ford, for the chief pardoner was preoccupied with a tottering ally who wanted more money.

His silence was understandable. By all assessments, earned re-entry was a dismal failure. Only 22,556, or 19 percent, of the estimated 117,000 eligible deserters and evaders bothered to sign up. The deadline had been extended twice—ostensibly, the Administration said, to ensure that everyone got wind of the offer. The resisters knew all too well what was offered: an oath of allegiance was required and charges were to be dropped in exchange for up to two years of "alternative service." In short, a guilty plea. The crime? Recognizing the fallacy of Vietnam several years before the rest of the nation caught on.

Some of the few who came back saw the irony. "I felt like I was copping out on the reason I left in the first place," evader Glenn Wilson of Greensboro, N.C., said after accepting alternate service.

There are other voices of outrage. The director of the National Campus Alliance for Amnesty asks why men must plead guilty to following their consciences. The ACLU calls the program a "depressing failure" and threatens a

lawsuit against the Selective Service System. The National Council of Churches says conditional amnesty is worse than no amnesty at all. There is movement afoot in Congress for an unconditional amnesty bill. "As I reject unconditional amnesty, so I reject revenge," Ford said in announcing the program. As the resisters reject earned re-entry, so they reject the country that offers it.

The resisters have found, of course, that not all pardons come with fine print on the bottom line. In their eyes it was no coincidence that the clemency offer so closely shadowed the pardon of Richard Nixon. The man who mailed their draft notices took his pardon and ran, while the resisters simply kept running. That is another reason why most have refused to return. They have found their private alternative service in alternative nations—10,000 in Canada alone.

Yet Clemency Board Chairman Charles Goodell, oblivious to his own statistics, has declared the program an "overwhelming success." Those who signed up, he has said, are at last willing to serve their country. This is the same Charles Goodell who in 1971 called the war a "moral disgrace" and said the U.S. was "destroying Indochina in the name of preserving it." War resisters who solemnly endorsed these sentiments are now paying for their discretion.

And what of the 56,500 Americans who died in Vietnam? The fellows at the American Legion hut tell us that they deserve atonement from the men who fled the fighting. The Veterans of Foreign Wars, who sat in stunned silence when Ford announced his amnesty intentions, want blood. The best the fugitives can offer is misplaced lives. Those who died in the war did not live to see what came out in the wash. Back home, their families watch the collapse on television while the President tries to wrench military money from Congress. Perhaps the wrong people are handing out the pardons.

Amnesty might have, in Gerald Ford's own words, "healed the country's wounds." Instead, it healed on the surface while a deeper wound bled below. Earned re-entry symbolized the nation's final disposal of the war's domestic casualties. The resisters are still on the outside looking in at the close of a seven-month clemency offer. In an era of supposed reconciliation, they have decided, the offer itself was unpardonable. ●

PHOTOGRAPH BY ROBERT FINK

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